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THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Lost Heiress," "The Deserted Wife," "The Missing Bride," "Retribution," etc.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FORSAKEN.

"Though the world for this commend thee,
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

"Still thy heart its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

"Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bends to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now." BYRON.

Lord Montressor arose early next morning, and devoted the whole forenoon to engaging a pleasant suit of rooms at the "Royal Adelaide," and in superintending their arrangement for the reception of his bride. The apartments were quite ready by eleven o'clock.

And a few minutes before twelve, Lord Montressor entered his carriage, and drove to the "Crown and Sceptre" to keep his appointment with Estelle.

He inquired for Lady Montressor, and was shown up at once into her private parlor, while the waiter took his card up to her ladyship's chamber. He waited impatiently for a few moments until the servant returned, with the information that neither Lady Montressor nor her woman was in her ladyship's room.

"That is strange," thought Lord Montressor. "Take this card up to Mr. Oldfield, and let him know that I would be happy to see him in this room," he said, handing the "pasteboard" to the waiter. The man received it and disappeared.

There was no suspicion nor misgiving in the impatience with which Lord Montressor waited for the appearance of Mr. Oldfield. He simply thought it unusual that Lady Montressor should not be ready to receive him, and wished to inquire for her of the minister. Presently the door opened, and Mr. Oldfield entered.

"Ah! how do you do, my dear friend? I hope Lady Montressor is well this morning?" said his lordship, advancing to meet the pastor.

"I hope so too, but Lady Montressor has not made her appearance to-day," said Mr. Oldfield.

"Indeed! and it is now," said his lordship, consulting the mantle clock, "half-past twelve."

"Her ladyship sometimes breakfasts and spends her mornings in her chamber, and as she was very much fatigued last night, probably she prefers to keep her own room to-day. Sit down, my lord! sit down! do not stand," said the minister, handing a chair to his visitor and seating himself.

"But, my dear sir, I sent up my card, and neither Lady Montressor nor her attendant is in her ladyship's apartment. I had hoped that my lady was with you."

"No, sir; no, no; I have seen neither Lady Montressor nor her maid this morning," said Mr. Oldfield, beginning to feel a vague uneasiness.

"This is a little unusual, is it not?" inquired his lordship.

"Eh?—yes! it *is*, my lord! *Very* unusual! I—think I will go up and see if—anything is the matter!" gasped the old man in a great accession of uneasiness, as he hurriedly left the room to go in search of his charge.

Lord Montressor being left alone, paced up and down the parlor floor until he was startled by the violent throwing open of the door, and the impetuous entrance of Mr. Oldfield, who pale and agitated held out two letters—one sealed, the other open and fluttering in his hand.

"What! what is the matter? Estelle! my Estelle! Is she ill? Has anything happened to her? In the name of heaven speak, Mr. Oldfield! What of my Estelle?" exclaimed Lord Montressor, stricken with a panic of anxiety.

"Gone! my lord! She is gone!"

"GONE!"

"Gone! Fled!"

"FLED!"

"Fled, my lord! Fled alone!"

"In the name of Heaven, my friend, what mean you?"

"Oh! sir! read and see!" exclaimed the old man, thrusting the two letters into the hands of his companion, and sinking into a chair and wiping the drops of cold perspiration from his forehead.

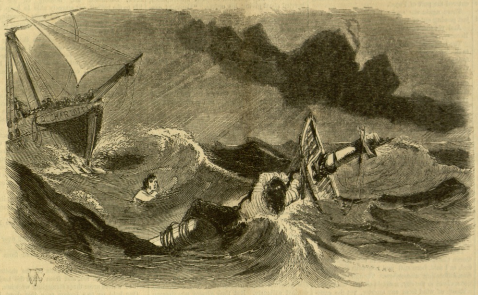
Lord Montressor seized the billets and naturally read the open one first. It was addressed to Mr. Oldfield, and was as follows:

> DEAR AND HONORED FRIEND:—Duty constrains me to depart. And though your heart so pleads for the temporal happiness of your "child," as almost now to drown the voice of conscience, yet on calm, dispassionate reflection you will see that it is so. Farewell! Be Heaven as kind to you, as you have been to the poor ESTELLE.

With a heavy groan, Lord Montressor threw this note aside, and tore open and devoured the contents of the other, which was addressed to himself. It was written as coolly as she in her self-denial had ordained it to be:

> MY LORD:—Conscience compels me to withdraw from you. Only to avoid hindrance I go secretly. An act of Parliament will free you from the bond of our merely nominal marriage. Farewell, my lord! May you be happy with a happier woman than the lost ESTELLE.

"What does all this mean? When did she go? Where has she gone? *How* has she gone? What friends has she? What means? Answer, in the name of Heaven, sir, if you can!" exclaimed Lord Montressor, in extreme agitation.



LORD MONTRESSOR ATTEMPTING TO RESCUE THE STRANGER ON THE WRECK OF THE MERCURY.

"Ah, my lord, I do not know! I cannot tell! How should I? Except—yes! give me time!" cried the old man, wiping the beaded drops from his forehead, and struggling to regain composure.

"Well, sir? Well?" exclaimed Lord Montressor, impatiently.

"Yes! Well! when did she go, you ask? Stay! let me collect myself and think—yes! she certainly last night spoke of going," said the old man somewhat incoherently.

"Last night she spoke of going, and you did not warn me? Oh! Mr. Oldfield!" exclaimed his lordship, reproachfully.

"My lord, she only *spoke* of going, and invoked my assistance. I refused to aid her, and endeavored to persuade her from her purpose. Had I suspected she was about to depart, I should at once have summoned your lordship. But who could have foreseen that she would have left us in this sudden manner?"

"She spoke last night of going! Inform me, sir, if you please, and as nearly as you can recollect, *all* that passed last night upon that subject."

"I will endeavor to comply, my lord," said the clergyman, who then commenced and related the conversation that had taken place between himself and Lady Montressor in that parlor, on the evening previous.

Lord Montressor groaned aloud.

"Sir! did she drop no hint as to *whither* she intended to go?"

"Not a word! not a breath! my lord!"

"Unhappy girl! Oh, Estelle! Estelle! whom I would have gathered into my bosom, safe from all the storms of life!—where are you now? Oh! Estelle! Estelle!" he groaned, burying his face in his hands. In another moment he started up.

"We waste time, Mr. Oldfield! Show me into her room! Perhaps there, some clue may be found to her flight."

With a deep sigh the aged minister nodded assent and preceded his friend up the stairs, and into the deserted chamber lately occupied by Lady Montressor.

Lord Montressor who had by this time recovered his presence of mind, calmly and collectedly went about the business of investigation.

"The bed has not been occupied; she did not therefore sleep here. But the couch is pressed—she must have laid down to rest. Let me see—here are the sperm candles, half burned down; she must have passed some hours of the night here. Her trunks are here—therefore she must have preferred to go out very quietly, and without calling assistance," he said, going about the room, and making his observations.

"Oh, my lord! ring the bell! summon the people of the inn and question them!" said the old clergyman, eagerly moving towards the bell-rope.

"Stay—do not ring yet; to examine these people should be our last resort; from appearances here, and from other circumstances I doubt, they know anything about her flight. And if they do not, I prefer not to enlighten them. Let us go down."

They left the room, locking the door and withdrawing the key.

When they had reached the parlor, Lord Montressor said—

"Make no stir; create no excitement; leave the people of the inn to suppose, as they naturally will do, that Lady Montressor has left with your knowledge and consent. I will tell you how we may manage, without exciting their suspicion, to get information from them. Ring, and call for your bill up to this present hour, as if you were about to leave—which I suppose you will do in the course of the day. When the account is presented, note its *last items*. See if there is supper, a post-chaise, a messenger, or a porter, charged last night for Lady Montressor. If so, you can cavil at these items, and so by disputing a little, get the whole facts, as far as they may be known here—whether she took supper, whether she procured a conveyance from the house—at what hour she went, and whither—and all without attracting particular attention."

"I see! I see!" exclaimed the old man, pulling the bell-rope so vigorously that it was speedily answered by a waiter, who was directed to bring up Mr. Oldfield's account.

When, a few minutes after, the man re-appeared, and presented the bill, Mr. Oldfield took it and glanced down its columns; supper for Lady Montressor was the last item.

"Hum-m—hum-m—hum-m"—said the old gentleman, in the tone of one taking exception—"I think there is some mistake here—I think her ladyship did not take supper?"

"Yes, please your reverence, I carried it up," replied the waiter.

"Hum-m—it must have been very late when you carried it up—as you say," said Mr. Oldfield, with the manner of a man who wont be imposed upon.

"Yes. please zir—at ten o'clock," replied the man.

"Hum-m. You have not charged the post-chaise, I see!"

"There wasn't no po'shay ordered, for no one here, please zir."

"Ah! yes! I—you are right—(the old man was about to say—"I *recollect*—you are right," but arrested himself before telling an untruth)—yes, you are right! Lady Montressor went away in a cab."

A few more adroitly put questions resulted in nothing satisfactory. The bill was paid, and the waiter, with a small donation, dismissed.

"She *must* have gone away in a cab, you know; so I told no untruth about *that*," said Mr. Oldfield, uneasy upon the subject of his little duplicity.

"These, then, are the facts as far as we know them—simply, that she took supper, rested awhile, wrote a letter, and, attended by her maid, left the house after ten o'clock. Now the question is—*Whither* did she go?"

The old minister mournfully shook his head. He could make no suggestion.

"I think," continued Lord Montressor—notwithstanding his great anxiety, calmly reasoning out the matter—"judging from all you told me, that she meant to leave England; to do this she must have gone to Liverpool or to London. The night train for London and Liverpool leaves at twelve o'clock. I think she went by that train. The grand junction is at Bristol. So far, I think, we have her. But at Bristol—did she take the London, or the Liverpool route? Have you any knowledge to throw light upon this subject?"

The clergyman shook his head.

"Has she *friends* at either of these places?"

Again the old man shook his head with a mournful wave of the hand, saying—

"*Once*, my lord. *many.*—*Now*, I doubt, *any*."

"My God! what will become of her! so delicate, so fragile, so sorrowful, so inexperienced—alone, and unfriended in this bitter world! Oh! Estelle! my Estelle! But I must not think of these things! to do so will unfit me for action. Tell me, sir—has she means?"

The old man groaned—

"My lord, her father, when he sent her wardrobe, sent also a check for a thousand pounds. She placed the latter in my hands for our current expenses. I drew the money for it; but never could prevail on her to receive back a shilling of it. It remains untouched in my possession yet."

"Then she has no funds at all! My Estelle! Oh! what will become of you!"

"Let me reflect—yes! she *has* funds; she has a small competency in her own right; five thousand pounds left her by her grandmother, it is in the hands of a banker in London."

"Then she has gone to London to draw it before leaving England! I may overtake and recover her yet! Oh! if I had known this precious fact three hours ago, I might then have gone after her by the noon train, and have been only twelve hours behind her! As it is, I must now wait for the midnight cars, and be a full day behind! Oh, Heaven! how difficult to govern one's impatience and be calm in a forced inaction under such circumstances! But patience. I shall see her soon! all will be well! What is the name of the banker who has her funds?" inquired his lordship, taking out his tablets.

"Scofield Brothers, Lombard street, London."

"Good afternoon, sir! I am going to pack up for my journey," said Lord Montressor, rising, and returning the memorandum to his pocket.

"Good day, my lord. I would myself accompany you on this journey, but that my parishioners are in sad want of their truant pastor, and my old wife is impatient to see me."

"I know it, I know it; it must be so—good-bye, sir. You have my everlasting gratitude for your kindness to Lady Montressor. Good bye!"

"Stay one moment, my dear lord! You know the tenor of her note! Suppose when you find her, she still refuses to return with you? Excuse my question, for the sake of my anxiety."

"Should she still refuse—I should give her time, use reason, persuasion, prayer! should not these avail, I should then use *my power*. I should compel Estelle to return with me."

"My Lord?"

"Yes, I repeat it! She shall not sacrifice herself to fanaticism. I will constrain my love to come home and be at peace!"

Thus the two gentlemen parted: Mr. Oldfield to prepare for his return to his pastoral charge, Lord Montressor to make arrangements for his journey to London.

His lordship was at the depot in full time. The train started at twelve. Swiftly as he was carried forward this seemed the longest ride and the longest night he had ever known. Some minutes less than two hours brought him to Bristol and the Grand Junction, where half an hour served for change of cars; and thus at half past three o'clock, he found himself whirled along through night, and mist, and rain, on the route towards London. Soon the morning dawned and reddened in the east behind what seemed a bank of cloud; it was the mingled mist and fog that overhung the leviathan of cities.

The cars entered London from the West and reached the depot just as the sun arose. Lord Montressor took a hackney coach and drove to a hotel in the immediate neighborhood of Lombard street. As it was now very early, some hours had yet to be lived through before he could hope to find the bankers at their place of business. He ordered an apartment, and got through the time as well as he could by making his morning toilet and attempting his morning meal. Directly after breakfast, he entered a carriage and drove to the banking house of Scofield Brothers. He inquired for either of the owners, and was ushered into a back office where the junior partner sat writing at a desk.

"Good morning, sir," said Lord Montressor, advancing—"You are——?"

"John Scofield, at your service," answered the banker, rising.

"Lord Montressor."

"Happy to see you, my lord. Pray be seated"—handing a chair. "Hope we may be able to serve you, this morning?"

"I thank you, sir."

Lord Montressor looked for an instant into the honest face of the banker, and then with the air of a man who states a fact known to himself, rather than of one who asks information upon a subject, he said—

"Lady Montressor was with you yesterday?"

"Yes, my lord."

"And withdrew her deposits, of course?"

"She did, my lord."

Lord Montressor paused. How to frame his next enquiry as to the whereabouts of Estelle, without exciting the astonishment and conjecture of the man to whom he spoke, was now the difficulty. However, the question must be put. Lord Montressor was not one to shrink; besides, what indeed was the importance of Mr. John Scofield's surprises and speculations to Lord Montressor?

"Favor me with Lady Montressor s London address, if you please, sir," said his lordship, quietly.

It was not with surprise nor wonder, but with simple consternation that the banker stood dumbfounded!

"Did you hear my question, Mr. Scofield?" asked Lord Montressor, after a pause.

"I beg pardon, my lord," said the banker, in a tone and manner in which astonishment was modified by respect; "but I am unable to furnish you with her ladyship's address. Lady Montressor has left England."

It was an overwhelming annunciation! Yet Lord Montressor neither started nor exclaimed; he was a man of too much firmness and self control to do either, and perhaps also he had been too well prepared for it by what had preceded; yet it was a stunning blow; he felt it so; he looked again and steadily, almost with rude scrutiny, into the face of John Scofield. Yes! he thought he could trust that face and confide in the rectitude and discretion of that man;—he knew also that the banker could not be really ignorant of the great trial lately concluded at the Exeter Assizes;—for the rest he must have faith in him.

"Will you favor me with a few moments of private conversation, Mr. Scofield?" he inquired, in a low voice.

"Certainly, my lord," replied the banker, dismissing his clerk, and closing and locking the door behind him—"Now, my lord, I am at your service," he concluded, returning and resuming his seat.

"You are of course aware, Mr. Scofield, of the painful scenes through which Lady Montressor——and myself," (he added in that affectionate and generous spirit in which he ever wished to associate *himself* in all that was distressing and humiliating in her life,)—"have lately passed."

"I am aware, my lord," replied the banker, gravely, and respectfully dropping his eyes.

"But you do not know, perhaps, that Lady Montressor and myself have not passed one single moment alone together since our marriage; or that notwithstanding the perfect legality of the ceremony that binds us together, Lady Montressor considers it her Christian duty to reserve herself from my protection; and in order to do so effectually has withdrawn herself from my knowledge. Now, I would know whither she has gone, if you, without a breach of confidence, can inform me."

The banker, who had listened in respectful sympathy to the words of Lord Montressor, now paused and reflected before answering—

"My lord, as Lady Montressor, of course, made no confidential communications to us, I do not know that any reason exists why I should not give you all the information upon this subject in my power."

"I will thank you then, sir, to proceed."

"The manner in which I learned that Lady Montressor was about to leave England was merely incidental, as my knowledge of her destination is, I may say, barely inferential."

"Proceed, sir, proceed."

"Her ladyship came, early yesterday morning—much about this time, in fact—to withdraw the funds she had in our hands. She required a portion of them in cash and the remainder in drafts upon some American house."

"Then she has gone to America!" interrupted Lord Montressor, recollecting at that trying moment the fervent admiration with which poor Estelle had often spoken of the young Western Republic.

"Undoubtedly, my Lord."

"Go on, sir! pray, go on—when did she sail? Her voyage must have been very sudden! She must have chanced upon a ship about to leave port."

"I think that quite likely, my lord. When she was about to leave us, she required that the money and drafts should be sent down to her at the Nelson's Head, before eleven o'clock, as she should leave the hotel at that hour. We had correspondents in New York and in Baltimore. I inquired of her ladyship upon which of these the drafts in her favor should be drawn, and she said—upon the Baltimore house. The money was sent in due season. Our clerk, who was intrusted with its delivery, saw Lady Montressor leave the hotel at eleven o'clock. And we know that the Princess, Captain Caton, sailed from this port at twelve, bound for Baltimore."

"Then we are to infer that she went to Baltimore, though the fact wants confirmation. One piece of information more, sir,—the name of your Baltimore correspondents?"

"Somerville and Son, Pratt street."

"Do you happen to know, sir, when the next vessel sails for the United States?"

"I do not, sir."

"Then I thank you for the assistance you have already given me. Good morning, sir."

"Good morning, my lord. If we can be so happy as to serve your lordship in any capacity, pray consider us always at your orders."

"I thank you, sir. Good day."

And thus the peer and the banker parted.

"Good Heaven! how very matured her plans must have been, and with what dispatch she must have carried them out!" thought Lord Montressor, as he left the banking-house of Scofield Brothers, re-entered his cab and drove to St. Catherine's Dock, to inquire for vessels bound for the United States. After a diligent search of several hours he found that there was no ship to sail for Baltimore in less than two weeks. The first that was expect ed to leave for that port was the Mercury, that would sail on or after the fifteenth of June.

Much disappointed, he returned to his hotel, called for writing materials, dashed off a hasty letter to Mr. Oldfield, detailing all that had happened, mailed it, called a cab and drove rapidly to the Liverpool depot, which he reached just a few minutes before the cars left.

His errand to Liverpool was to learn whether within less than two weeks any vessel would leave that port for Baltimore. He discovered that there was one to sail in six days for Boston, one in a week to Halifax, and one in ten days for New Orleans. But as neither of these promised a quicker termination to his proposed voyage, or a speedier meeting with Estelle than did the chances of the Mercury, he turned from Liverpool in disappointment.

He took the night train to Bristol, where he was more fortunate in finding a vessel—the "Queen Charlotte"—that would sail for Baltimore on or after the tenth of June. Upon further inquiry at other ports, he found no more satisfactory prospect, and therefore he bespoke a passage on the Queen Charlotte.

He then went down to his seat in Dorsetshire, and employed the intervening time in making judicious arrangements for that voyage, which, could he have found a vessel about immediately to sail for the United States, he would certainly without any preparation have undertaken.

Withal, however, it was a weary, weary decade of days that passed before the tenth of June arrived, and Lord Montressor found himself on board the good ship Queen Charlotte.

CHAPTER IX.

SHIPWRECK.

"Ah! many a dream was in that ship
An hour before her death;
And thoughts of home with sigh's disturbed
The sleeper's long drawn breath.

* * * * * * * *

A hundred souls in one instant of dread
Are hurried over the deck;
And fast the miserable ship
Becomes a lifeless wreck.
Her keel hath struck a hidden rock,
Her planks are torn asunder,
And down comes her mast with a reeling shock,
And a hideous crash like thunder.
Her sails are draggled in the brine,
That gladdened late the skies,
And her pennant that kissed the fair moonshine,
Down many a fathom lies." WILSON.

It was a glorious summer morning, when the splendor of the sky, the sparkling brightness of the water, the animating bustle on the docks, and in the boats—all conspired to raise and cheer the spirits of the spectator.

At ten o'clock Lord Montressor entered the long boat that was to convey him to the Queen Charlotte, where he found the captain, mate and men all engaged in the hearty work of preparation for getting under way. A fair wind had sprung up, and they were but waiting for the ebb tide. They had not to wait long. At twelve precisely the tide began to ebb. The captain came upon deck, seized his speaking-trumpet, and called out,

"All hands! Up anchor!"

In an instant every man was on deck.

"Each officer to post! Man the capstan! Stand by to let fall the tops'ils. Heave round the capstan! Heave roundly!"

"Ay, ay, sir! Anchor's apeak!"

"Heave! Heave my hearties! Heave and trip the anchor!"

The men laid themselves to the bars, turned vigorously, and then stopped to breathe.

"A-trip it is, sir!" cried the mate.

The moment the anchor was a-weigh the ship began to cast to larboard.

The captain shouted through his speaking-trumpet—

"Hoist the jib and the fore-to'mas' stays'ils! Helm-a-starboard! So—steady—steady."

"Ay, ay, sir! Steady it is!" responded the helmsman.

The crew worked heartily, the brave ship righted herself, the sails filled with the breeze, and the Queen Charlotte stood gallantly out to the Channel. A shout from the shore cheered her on.

But she was not a swift sailer, this honest old Queen Charlotte, any more than her royal namesake was a "fast woman." She was, on the contrary, "slow and sure," like her good old majesty, the defunct queen. She was, in fact, an old-fashioned, short and square-bowed brig, one of the last of her generation, and very unlike in build and behavior to the long and narrow-decked, high-masted and rakish Baltimore clippers that were then in such high favor. In something more than due time, then, the Queen Charlotte left Lundy Island to leeward, got out of the Channel and into the broad Atlantic.

The fair wind continued for several days, and yet the brig made but moderate progress. How she would possibly get on against a head-wind remained to be seen.

The season seemed to promise a continuance of fine weather, and consequently a pleasant voyage, for the violent spring gales were over and the latter summer storms were not soon to be expected.

Yet they had not been at sea more than two weeks before the weather changed, the sky became dark and gloomy, the wind sprang up, the waves arose, and for several days the ship beat about in a high sea, against a head wind, making no progress, scarcely able to hold her own. Day after day showed the same scene—morning after morning the murky sky, heavy with clouds, lowered down upon a turbulent sea, broken into high and coursing waves, whose crests were tipped with frost, like foam upon the lips of racers—night after night the impenetrable darkness above, around, beneath, and relieved only by the phosphoric glimmer and sparkle of the crested waves. A frisky clipper might have been lost in this gale, but the staid old Queen Charlotte "stood the storm" for a week.

And then there came another change of weather, bringing a clear sky, gentle breeze, and a calm sea, which continued with little variation for two or three weeks, during which the brig made moderate headway.

Ill could Lord Montressor brook this sort of "making haste slowly." Often he reproached himself for having taken passage in the Charlotte, instead of waiting ten days longer to embark in the Mercury. And this regret was in no degree lessened by an event that occurred when they were nearing the Azores.

It was a very fine day in August, with a fair, brisk wind, and the Queen Charlotte, being in most unaccountably gay spirits, had crowded on all her canvass, even to the studding sails and royals, and was doing her best at running before the wind—as if her long defunct majesty had ever in her court array forgotten her royal dignity and tried to run! While thus going under full sail the brig was hailed by a vessel bearing down full upon her.

"Ship—ahoy-oy!" came reverberating over the water from the speaking-trumpet of the pursuer.

"Halloo!" responded the Queen Charlotte.

"Who are you? where do you hail from? where are you bound?"

"The Queen Charlotte, Brownloe master, from Bristol to Baltimore! Who are you?"

"The Mercury, Captain Brande, from London to Baltimore."

Almost as she spoke she bore rapidly down upon the brig, came alongside, and without stopping cheered and passed!

But among the passengers that crowded the upper deck, Lord Montressor had recognized a man, whose appearance there sent all the blood from his heart to his brain!

This man was Victoire L'Orient.

How came he there? What was his object?

He also was going to America—to Baltimore! Why? What should carry him thither? Was he going in pursuit of Estelle? Had he, perhaps, managed to keep up a system of espionage around her? Had he discovered her flight to America—to Baltimore? and would he pursue her thither and persecute her there?

Before these questions had fairly formed themselves in the mind of Lord Montressor, the Mercury, with her crew and passengers, had cheered again and passed far ahead.

The Queen Charlotte comparatively "slow and sure," even when under full sail and before a fresh wind, and unflurried either by the example of the Mercury or the impatience of her own passengers and crew, kept on the even tenor of her way.

All that afternoon and that night she sailed before the fair wind, and at sunrise the next morning entered the port of Fayal.

There again she spoke the Mercury that was just passing out of the harbor.

And yet *once more* the Queen Charlotte saw the Mercury, alas! but we anticipate.

The brig remained in the port of Fayal two days to discharge a portion of her cargo and to take in freight, as well as to obtain a supply of fresh provisions and water, and then again set sail.

The weather continued fine, with little variation in the clear sky, fresh wind and gentle sea for several days, during which the brig made fair progress towards the Chesapeake.

It was the morning of the twentieth of August that the man on the lookout cried—

"Land ho!" and the distant points of Cape Charles and Cape Henry hove in sight. And an hour after noon the Queen Charlotte entered the Bay.

That night the wind suddenly fell. And the next day—a day ever to be remembered on that coast—the brig lay becalmed under a burning sky, and upon a motionless sea.

And now my mind shrinks from describing the events that made hideous that afternoon and night—shrinks both because of the deep horror one feels in reflecting upon those awful scenes of storm and devastation, when sky and ocean meet in deadly conflict, and fire, air and water—all the elements of organized nature seem resolving back into original "chaos and old night."

This day—the twenty-first of August, when the Queen Charlotte lay becalmed in the Chesapeake, had, as I said, been still and hot with an oppressive, suffocating atmosphere. Though there was not a cloud in the sky, a ripple on the water, nor a breath of wind from any quarter, yet the experienced old seamen seemed grave and thoughtful, and looked to the rigging of their ship. And the captain paced the deck, casting an eye—now to the sky, now to the sea, and now to the rigging.

"What can be the matter with the skipper?" asked one inexperienced passenger of another.

"He's on the lookout for squalls," answered the other, carelessly, not believing what they said.

Abaft, two Baltimore youths, homeward bound, were leaning over the taffrail, looking despondently into the motionless water.

"Was ever such a sea and such a sky as this? Not a ripple, not a breath, and as hot as Hades! Heaven send that the wind would rise!" complained one.

"Yes!" it is a right down deuced bore to lay becalmed here, for days, perhaps, almost in gunshot of port," grumbled the other.

"Now, d'ye see them two d——d land lubbers with their elbows on the taffrail?" observed one bronzed and grizzled old "salt" to his shipmate. "They want to hurry the wind up! Avast there, my fine fellows! don't you be impatient! The wind will come out from the west, and speak to you presently!"

As noon approached an ominous change crept over the face of the heavens and the waters.

Not a cloud was to be seen, yet the whole heavens visibly darkened, assuming a dull, hazy, coppery hue.

Not a billow ruffled the surface of the waters, yet the whole vast sea perceptibly swelled.

Not a breath of wind stirred, yet at intervals a low voice wailed across the waters as if nature mourned the coming destruction.

The captain still walked the deck, telescope in hand, making observations, and occasionally giving orders.

"What do you think of the weather, captain? Is there a storm brewing?" asked Lord Montressor, joining him.

The skipper lowered his glass, and turning upon the questioner a sly look that might have been read—Do you really think I am going to tell you now?—replied—

"By the soul of Nelson! I cannot at this moment inform you, my lord. It may be only a fresh wind that will take us large into port; and then again it may be the confoundest hurricane that has ever been seen on this coast!—Avast there! Mate, see that the lightning conductors are rigged out!" he said, suddenly breaking off to give the order.

"Ay, ay, sir," replied that officer, touching his hat, and going below to obey the command.

"At least," said Lord Montressor, resuming the conversation, "you have sufficient time to take every necessary precaution for the safety of the vessel."

"Humph—humph—why certainly it is not exactly upon us yet, whatever it is! and I and the 'Charlotte' have weathered a storm before to-day. Why, sir! I could tell you of a time, when we doubled Cape Horn——" said the skipper, launching into a tale of a tempest that was presently interrupted—the tale—not the tempest—by the re-appearance of the mate on deck, to report the lightning conductors rigged out.

"As you said, my lord, there is time to make ready for what may be coming, thank Heaven! This may be only a fresh wind that will carry us gallantly into port; therefore, I shall not take in sail just yet; though it is best to be ready at short notice to do so. Mate!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Call all hands on deck!"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Let them stand by to take in the royals and to'gallant stun's'ils."

"Ay, ay, sir."

As the meridian passed the sun took on a dark blood-like color, and the awful stillness of the elements seemed more foreboding.

Slowly—slowly the Spirit of the Storm advanced and took shape.

A black cloud, seemingly no larger than an eagle with spread wings, appeared on the Western horizon, directly under the sun. The wind awoke with a sigh, and breathed across the waters, curling the surface into little ripples, and moving the sails of the brig, and then died away.

"In royals!" shouted the captain.

The order was executed.

The cloud climbed faster, higher, increasing in size and darkness. Again the wind arose and moaned across the waters, rolling the waves against the tide and fluttering the sails of the ship, and then died away as before.

"Take in the to'gallant stu'n-s'ils! And you at the wheel! mind your helm!" thundered the captain.

The cloud had nearly reached the zenith. Once more the wind sprung up, and roared across the now angry waters, driving the sea into high waves, and filling all the sails of the brig that now bounded before the blast.

"Clew down the topsails; haul up the courses! Hard down!" shouted the captain.

The storm came on apace, the whole sky was overcast and darkened. The wind lashed the sea into fury and drove the brig rocking and reeling forward, on her course.

The passengers swarmed upon the deck, and crowded around the skipper.

"Captain! captain! is there any danger?" asked one.

"Captain! captain!" exclaimed several others, as the skipper, regardless of their interruptions, hurried about giving his orders. "Captain! captain——"

"For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, go below! You are in my way! You hinder me in the working of the ship! You risk your own lives as well as the safety of the vessel!" said the skipper, impatiently, hastening away.

"But—for the Lord's sake, what are you going to do?" asked the first speaker, laying hold of the captain's coat-skirt to detain him.

"We are trying to get into Hampton Roads!—there we shall be safe! Once more, for Heaven's sake, gentlemen, be advised, and go below!" exclaimed the captain, breaking away.

A vivid flash of lightning, kindling into blue flame every scrap of metal about the ship, accompanied by an awful peal of thunder, and followed by a sudden deluge of rain, so enforced the order, that most of the passengers were glad to make a hasty retreat.

The storm hurried onward; the whole heavens lowered down upon the sea, and all was black as the blackest midnight, save when a dazzling flash of lightning kindled the whole scene into a momentary conflagration; showing the whole tremendous sea, rising and falling in mountains and vallies, and clouds and waves mingling together in wildest chaos, so that, which was the heavens, and which was the earth, it was almost impossible to know! And through all this horrible confusion, the brave ship—heaving, plunging, reeling,—struggled; now lifted upon the top of some mountain wave, high among the clouds; then pitched headlong down into the dreadful yawning chasm of the sea!

The captain never for an instant left the deck. His presence there enheartened the crew, who worked gallantly. But their almost superhuman efforts failed to get the ship into Hampton Roads. She was driven furiously past their entrance. Through all that awful night the captain never left his post. At intervals some passenger, more venturous than the others, would make the desperate attempt to come upon deck; but even if he were not, by the heaving of the ship, hurled headlong down the companion ladder, he was soon glad to retreat. The storm raged on with unabating violence. The captain never lost his presence of mind, nor the crew their courage. The former gave his orders, decisively, clearly, emphatically—the latter obeyed with alacrity. Every sail had been in succession taken in, and the ship was now driving along under bare poles. As she had done many times before, the good ship weathered the storm. Yet was the night not unmarked by disaster to her brave crew; a heavy sea, taking her amidships, swept off three of her gallant seamen; but in the dense darkness, or blinding glare, amid the deafening noise of the tempest, this loss was not known—it was not discovered until morning.

It was long after midnight, when the fury of the storm had in some degree abated; the ship was scudding along before the wind, and the captain and the mate, exhausted by their late tremendous labors, were resting on the deck, when the distant report of a single cannon came booming over the waters.

"A ship in distress; but, great Heaven! what earthly power can aid her in such a night as this?" said the captain.

The mate made no reply, but listened anxiously for a repetition of the signal.

In about three minutes the firing was repeated.

"The Lord help her," said the mate, reverently—"what can be done for her, truly! We are making rapidly towards her; if it were broad day we might help her! Or if she could exist till day, we might save the crew. What think you, captain?"

"Good heaven, that depends upon circumstances! If in beating about in this storm, she has sprung a leak, she must go down in a few minutes."

"But if she has been cast upon a sand-bank, or driven ashore?"

"Even then it is doubtful whether we could aid her! If she has been cast upon Smith's Sand-bar, as I fear is the case, we could not approach her without sharing her fate!"

"But the boats?"

"Would not reach her in this sea."

"But the gale may go down before she breaks up," suggested the pitying and hopeful mate.

"Well! Heaven grant it, for if it should turn out so, we may be of assistance," replied the captain.

Every five minutes the signal gun was fired. The captain, mate and crew, listened in impotent sympathy, or spoke together in hushed and solemn voices; for well they knew that, but for the blessing of Providence upon their almost superhuman exertions, this case of shipwreck might have been their own.

Meanwhile the Queen Charlotte flew before the wind. At every firing of the signal gun, she seemed nearer the sound.

"We are approaching that other ship! We must look out and not run a-foul of her!" said the captain, leaving his position, and going forward to give orders.

Once again the signal gun was fired, and then it was heard no more. When ten or fifteen minutes had elapsed, and the listening crew heard no repetition of the sound—

"God help her," said the captain, "she is lost!"

The crew echoed his groan.

Day dawned, and the sun arose over a wild, wild scene! Black and ragged clouds, the fragments of the broken storm, drove across the sky! The wind was still very strong, and the waves ran very high.

The Queen Charlotte scudded along under a close reefed maintopsail and reefed foresail. She kept a sharp look out for some sign of the fate of the ship she had heard firing the signal guns in the night. The mate took his post forward, and with telescope in hand, scanned the expanse of sea ahead. And thus it was scarcely a quarter of an hour after sunrise that that officer suddenly dropped his glass and called out—

"A wreck on the sand-bank ahead!"

The captain hurried forward, seized the glass from the hand of the mate, levelled it and took sight.

"By my life, it is the poor Mercury! and if we do not look sharp we shall run foul of her! Mind what you are about there at the wheel. Hard up. Hard up—so! Steady—steady!" cried the captain.

The ship answered her helm, and presently came in sight of the wreck.

It was a terrible spectacle.

There before them lay the sand-bank and the broken ship!

The ill-fated Mercury had been pitched headforemost with such tremendous force upon the bank, that her prow was buried deep in the sands, and her stern lifted, revealing one-third of the length of her keel. Her masts had been snapped short off, and with all their sails and shrouds had fallen forward upon the sand. And there she lay stranded, broken, helpless—exposed to every assault of wind and wave! At intervals a heavy sea broke over her. A nearer approach showed some half-dozen haggard wretches, the remnant of her unfortunate crew, assembled aft, holding on for dear life to the taffrail, yet scarcely able to keep their hold, with their hair and garments streaming in the wind. They were seen to wave signals of entreaty to the advancing ship.

But a horrible sea raged between the brig and the sand-bank! To have approached much nearer the wreck, would have been inevitably to share its fate! To have put out a boat would have been madness!—no boat could have lived a moment in such a sea.

Yet the Queen Charlotte could not, would not, pass her by. The only thing to do then, was to wear and heave to, to watch and seize an opportunity of rendering aid, if perchance the winds and waves should subside in time to send out boats to her.

But it was a terrible thing to lay there inactive, and behold sea after sea advance and break over that bound and disabled vessel!—at every advance shaking her hull almost in pieces—at every retreat carrying off some portion of her rigging or cargo. And it was more terrible still to behold those half dozen fellow creatures, clinging in desperation to their frail support!

At last a huge wave arose and rearing itself, like a moving cliff crested with foam, advanced upon the doomed wreck!

At this appalling sight, all on board the brig held their breath for very awe.

The mountain wave reached and broke over the sandbank. And the ship was swamped!

A simultaneous cry of horror arose from the brig!

The next moment fragments of the shattered ship strewed the sea, and from amid the boiling hell of waters arose three struggling wretches.

One held on to a broken spar that kept him afloat.

Two others, for a single instant, strove for the possession of a plank that both had seized, but which was not sufficient to sustain more than one; then the stronger of the two, whom Lord Montressor thought he recognized as Victoire L'Orient, freeing his hand, struck off the weaker, who immediately sank, but in the impetuosity of this cruel blow he also lost his own hold upon the plank, and disappeared in the whirlpool of waters.

The third man—the sole survivor of the wreck, clinging desperately to the fragment of broken spar, and each moment growing more incapable of retaining his hold, was dashed hither and thither, at the mercy of the waves.

Lord Montressor, who had been standing, leaning over the bulwarks, chafing with impatience, at his own inactivity, could now endure this sight no longer. It was not in his brave and generous nature thus to stand and behold a fellow creature helpless amid such deadly peril, and not wish to risk life if needful for his rescue. Lord Montressor was a man of athletic and powerful frame, as well as of heroic spirit. He had been trained in all those gymnastic exercises calulated to develope extraordinary muscular strength and skill. Calling upon a seaman to assist him, he hastily stripped off his upper garments, fastened a strong rope securely around his waist, and, against the vehement expostulations of all who were near him, threw himself into the raging sea.

The Captain, crew and passengers watched him in intense anxiety.

Buffetting the billows, he made towards the struggling wretch. Wind and tide were in his favor, though three times was he violently thrown back. Yet would he not give the signal to be drawn in. He seemed resolved to save the shipwrecked man or share his fate. At length it was due as much to an apparent accident, as to his own strength and skill that he was enabled to effect his purpose—a friendly wave lifting him upon its breast, cast him forward in reach of the spar; simultaneously he threw his arms out and seized the man; it was time! the strength of the poor wretch was exhausted,—he was about to drop off! Wave after wave dashed over them, as if the sea had resolved to sever them, but Lord Montressor held on bravely to his prize. He gave the signal; the men on board the brig began to haul in the rope, and in a few moments more the shipwrecked man and his gallant preserver were safe upon the deck of the Queen Charlotte!

Lord Montressor left his charge in the hands of the sailors, and to escape the congratulations of his companions, as well as to change his wet clothes, he went below.

Amid all the horror with which he reflected upon the scenes of the shipwreck, one question forced itself upon his mind. Victoire L'Orient had been a passenger on board the ill fated Mercury—was he lost or saved?—was he the man who had been seen to strike his fellow from the floating plank and perish in the cruel act? had he, in fact, been among the number of the passengers who had been swept off from the stern gallery? Or had he, perhaps, previously taken passage in some boat, that might, at some earlier hour of the disaster, have left the wreck in the desperate hope of reaching the shore? and had he perchance so reached the shore?—in a word, was he lost or saved? This question, as it was inevitable it should—pressed anxiously upon his mind.

And yet reader! had Lord Montressor believed the man whom he saved to be Victoire L'Orient, he would just as certainly have risked his life for his preservation.

Meanwhile, the beaten and battered victim of the wreck was taken into the captain's cabin, supplied with dry clothing, refreshed with bread and wine, and forced to lie down upon a berth to recover his exhausted strength. The captain, who like all old sailors, was a tolerably good physician, would not permit his guest to be questioned until he had some rest.

"And, indeed," said the old skipper, "he is Lord Montressor's own prize, and shall be examined first of all by his lordship!"

And in truth the stranger seemed to be of a similar opinion; for after he had been refreshed by a short rest, his first request was that he might be permitted to see and thank his brave preserver.

Word to this effect was transmitted to Lord Montressor, who lost no time in obeying the summons. He entered the cabin and took his seat by the side of the berth upon which the shipwrecked passenger lay.

The stranger seemed to be a man of about twenty-two years of age, of symmetrical form and handsome face, having a Grecian profile; fair, clear complexion; golden-brown hair, and dark, hazel eyes.

"I am glad to find you so well recovered, my friend," said Lord Montressor, looking with kind interest upon his rescued waif.

"I thank you, my lord—I beg pardon! but I understood my gallant preserver to be the Viscount Montressor," said the young man, fixing his dark, expressive eyes with a look of inquiry upon the face of his lordship.

"That is my name, sir."

'And mine is Julius Levering. I am a Baltimore man, my lord, and am not unacquainted with the fame of Lord Montressor," said the youth.

Lord Montressor gravely waived this compliment, and said—

"I hope that you have suffered no injury from the floating fragments of the wreck, sir?'

"I thank you; none, my lord," said Julius Levering, passing his hand thoughtfully across his brow; then withdrawing it, he added, "In truth, I know not *how*, in adequate terms, to express my eternal gratitude to your lordship for the preservation of my life."

"Thank Providence, my dear sir, and not me. My act was too instinctive to merit recollection," returned Lord Montressor.

"But, my dear lord, you risked your own valuable life to save that of a stranger!"

"As I should have also risked it to save an enemy. The act was merely impulsive—inevitable, I may say! Pray let us drop that part of the subject. Now tell me, if you please, were there any other persons saved from the wreck, do you know?"

"Great heaven! I do not, sir! We struck the sand-bank just after midnight. At daybreak fourteen of our number left the ship in an open boat, that seemed to have no chance of living in such a sea; they embarked in the frantic expectation of being able to reach the Maryland shore. Whether the boat ever made the land, or whether, as is most likely, she went down amid the waves, I have no means of knowing! I only know, that except myself, those who preferred to remain and take their chances with the ship, fared no better than she did, whatever her fate may have been. Before that last great sea took us—and even before your ship hove in sight of us—we had lost several of our companions, blown off or washed off from their frail hold. Among those who were swept off right before my eyes, was a poor old fragile French woman—one Madame L'Orient. Good heaven! shall I ever get rid of that vision!"

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

HEARTS AT REST.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

CHAPTER I.

"In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another nest;
In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove;
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

The "Eastman farm" was the handsomest in all the country round. Two hundred acres of the best kind of land, and kept in perfect order by Mr. Eastman, his two sons, Charley and James, and two hired men. Every one admired the farm, and every one liked the house. It was a pleasant, home looking kind of place.

The house itself was a large, square building, which had once been yellow, but which had grown gray with time. There were patches of moss upon the roof, and wooden doorsteps, and the trees that had been planted by Charley Eastman's grandfather, when the house was first built, now overtopped the roof, and threw their giant arms high up into the sky. The square front yard was filled with rose bushes, and syringas, and locust trees; and the broad walk that led up to the door was paved with blue flag stones, and bordered, on either side, with box and mignionette. There were heart-shaped beds of pinks and violets, and round beds of tulips, and square beds of daffodils and monkshood, and at each corner of the yard, at regular intervals along the walk, great peonys or "pinys," as the country people call them, that were the pride and glory of old Mrs. Eastman's heart. The old front yard was full of dim and fragrant recesses, and quiet nooks that held rustic seats, put up by Charley—in short, the most delicious place in the world, for a flirtation or courtship—and so Charley found it to his cost.

An orphan cousin named Susan, lived in the family as one of the children. She had come there when Charley was a little boy, and Mrs. Eastman, who had no daughters, had grown attached to her, and refused to part with her. She was a pretty, innocent looking girl, with black eyes and dark brown hair, and the greatest worker of her age in all the country round. But surely, Charley Eastman, handsome, eager and merry, as he was, need never have fancied himself in love with her!

This was the way it happened. The spring of Charley's eighteenth year, was a beautiful one. The snow vanished early, and in the latter part of April, the back door of the farmhouse was set wide open, for the bright sunshine to stream in upon the yellow floor. Charley had been closeted in the dark parlor, ever since breakfast, intent upon finishing "a novel" which he had borrowed of a friend in the village. As a matter of course the lovers were made happy at its close. He left the youthful Edgar and Belinda standing at the altar, and sauntering out through the kitchen, stood a moment in the door. The soft, warm sunshine fell all about him—the birds were singing merrily in the garden beyond the stone wall—the hens were scratching in the fresh, moist earth, and croaking to each other in a subdued kind of tone—and all seemed full of fresh and beautiful life. The spring time of nature was on the earth around him; and the spring time of life within his soul. He thought it must be beautiful to be loved, and thinking thus, he turned and watched his cousin Susan, as she flitted up and down the kitchen, sweeping and dusting. She was young, and pretty, and graceful. He marked her fresh, fair face—her rounded figure, her taper ancle and plump little foot, and felt, in his heart, the first stirrings of an indefinite trouble. Poor boy! he thought it love! His resolve was taken.

"Susan, come here!" he called.

The young girl came, and leaning upon her broom as she stood before him, looked up in his face. She had never looked prettier than then, with the flush of healthful exercise on her cheek, and the joy of an active, even temperament sparkling in her eyes; and the inflammable heart of her cousin beat fast and quick.

"Put down the broom, Susy, and sit down here with me."

He spoke so gravely, that she looked in his face with surprise—but obeyed him without a word.

He took her small brown hand in his. It had been darkened and hardened by constant labor, but he only thought of its pretty shape, and how well a plain, gold ring would look upon the third finger.

"Susan," he said, plunging, "in media res" at once, like a brave fellow, "I have been thinking that I should like to get married."

Susan blushed and played with her apron string.

"And I want you for my wife," pursued her eager wooer.

"Why, Charley Eastman, what nonsense you are talking!"

The sunburned cheek of the girl flushed to a deeper red, though, as she spoke, and Charley saw, by the half smile that played around her mouth, that she was not very seriously offended.

"It isn't nonsense, Susy. I am in earnest, and I wish you would be. Come, Susy, say yes."

"Nonsense—let me go."

"Not till you answer me," said Charley, resolutely, holding fast the hand that tried to free itself. "See—there is father coming up from the barn after me. Now before he gets here, you must give me an answer. Which shall it be, Susy—yes or no?"

The girl was silent till the farmer had nearly reached them. Then she tried to escape again.

"Let me go, Charley—let me go."

"Tell me then which it shall be."

"Oh, dear—what will uncle say!—Well—yes—then, if you will have it so. Now let me go."

"Give me a kiss first;" and catching his betrothed bride in his arms, he kissed her, very unceremoniously, much to the astonishment of his father, who reached the doorstep, just as the blushing Susan snatched up her broom and ran away.

"Charles, my son, what does this mean?" asked the farmer, looking sternly at the boy

"Nothing, father—only you are going to have Susy for a daughter one of these days."

"Ah." The farmer paused to digest the idea, and smiled graciously. But turning to his son, who was going whistling toward the field, with his hands in his pocket, he added sagely—

"For all that sir—I am very glad you think of marrying the girl but you may as well do your kissing in the house, in future."

"All right, sir!" and Charley walked off, thinking what a simple affair courtship was, after all, and wondering why "Edgar and Belinda" made use of so many large words and fine phrases, when a simple question and answer would have done quite as well.

It was known all over the village, before long, that Charley and Susan were to be married. Charley was considered a lucky fellow, by all who knew the notable qualities of his bride elect;—I suppose he considered himself so, likewise. He knew Susan would make a good wife—but he did wish, sometimes, that she would not think so often of the churning or baking, when she was with him, or leave him so often, to see to pickles and preserves, when he felt particularly affectionate and romantic. Still, the two years slipped by, and not a doubt of her fitness for the place she was about to fill, or his affection for her, entered Charley's mind, till the Sunday before his wedding day.

He was sitting between Susan and his father, in the old-fashioned pew at church, with his mind running a long way from the sermon which the good minister had just commenced, when his eyes, in wandering over the seats, fell upon a face that made him start. It was that of a girl some eighteen years of age, who sat in the deacon's pew, beside the deacon's daughter, Ellen Clark. She did not look like Mr. Clark, or any of the family. He could see, even when she was sitting down that she was tall, and slender, and elegantly formed—he saw, moreover, that one of the whitest and smallest hands, ungloved, and with a diamond ring sparkling on the third finger, supported her oval cheek. Her face was not beautiful—but it was intellectual—dreamy—everything he had fancied in the ideal woman he had once loved—her hair, of a soft, light brown, waved over her broad temples in heavy bands, and her dark, blue eyes were fixed thoughtfully upon the floor, as if her thoughts were also far away. Charley gazed at her with his soul in his eyes. The deacon was not in his pew, and a portly, middle-aged gentleman who occupied his place, was sound asleep, so there was no one to rebuke him. At once the secret of his indifference to his betrothed wife rose up before him. He had never really loved her, and now, meeting the woman who was his fate, he could not stir to win her. He cursed the hour in which he first thought of love, and wiped the cold dew from his forehead, as he gazed at the stranger. She roused herself from her reverie, with a gentle sigh, and those dark, blue eyes, glancing round at the congregation, met those of Charley Eastman. I do not know what she read in those hazel orbs—but at first she looked astonished, and then a deep crimson glow suffused her face. She turned away, and Charley dropped his eyes, fearful of giving her pain. But all through the sermon, that face was in his mind, and he was saying to himself—"Oh, if I had only seen her before—if I were only free to try to win her now!"

When the service was ended, and every one turned to go home, he looked once more towards the deacon's pew. The lady had risen, and the portly gentleman was folding her silken scarf over shoulders a sculptor would have envied for a model. He saw her draw on her white kid gloves, and come down the aisle, leaning on the arm of the gentleman. He waited, with Susan standing close beside him, and as she passed, the fringe of her scarf caught in his pew. With trembling fingers he disengaged it, and the lady looking up to thank him, met his eyes once more. Again that crimson tide flushed her face, but she bowed coldly and passed on. Charley went home in a state of mind bordering on distraction. He did not even know her name, and on the following Wednesday he was to be married.

But Susan was more fortunate. Calling at Deacon Clark's, on the following day, she was introduced to the stranger from New York, and left an invitation for her to attend the wedding. Poor Charley knew nothing of this, and it did not detract from his embarrassment, when, on the wedding evening, he entered the parlor of the old homestead, with his bride, to see the lady of whom he had thought and dreamed constantly, leaning quietly on the arm of the old gentleman whom he had begun to hate, and waiting to see *him* married! The room seemed to whirl before him, and he was pale and silent as he stood before the clergyman. How *could* he speak the vows that bound him to another, while she was so near him! But it was done, and standing like one in a dream, beside his bride, Charley received the congratulations of the company. *She* stood before him, and kissing the bride, bowed gracefully to him. Charley gazed upon her in anguish—she was lost to him forever.

"Bless me," said Susan, in a bustling way that jarred painfully upon his excited nerves, "I forgot to introduce you to our new friends. Mr. Charles Eastman—Mr. and Mrs. Edward Vane."

Charley bowed, but turned still paler than ever. She, too, was married—the man he had taken for a father or uncle was her husband! The color forsook his lips and cheek—he staggered and fell, fainting, at her feet.

There was a terrible confusion in the room, for a fainting fit, among these strong men and women, was a most unusual occurrence. When Charley opened his eyes, his head was resting on Susan's bosom, and the white hand of Mrs. Vane was bathing his temples with water. But when she saw that he was conscious, she rose up and passed into the garden, with his brother James.

It was but a few moments' work for him to overrule all the objections of Susan, and invite all the company there. He saw them scatter through the quiet walks—and saw Susan, arm in arm with Ellen Clark, before he started in search of Mrs. Vane. He found her alone leaning against the stone wall, with a cluster of white roses in her hand.

"You here!" she said, in astonishment, looking up in his pale face.

"Yes—will you give me one of those roses?" he asked, abruptly.

She gave it with a careless smile, and drew her shawl around her with a slight shiver.

"It is cold," she said, turning away. "Where are they all?"

"Stay one moment," murmured Charley, forgetting everything. But she did not hear him, and gliding gracefully along the walk, she went to meet her husband, who was approaching, and taking his arm, went into the house.

Charley Eastman sank down against the cold stone wall, and pressed the white rose to his lips.

"It is the only token I shall ever have of her," he murmured. "But if God had willed it how I might have loved that woman."

Calmed and soothed by the burning tears that had bedewed the poor, pale flower, he placed it next his heart, and returned to the house. The guests were departing, and he was just in time to see her wave her hand, as she rode away in Deacon Clark's great wagon, by the side of her husband. She had an elegant home in the gay city of New York. He knew that she was to return to it on the morrow, and that it was improbable that they should ever meet again. He gazed after her, and sighed; then followed Susan into the parlor where his father and mother sat, and closed the door. He shut out love and beauty—but he had had his wish.

He was a married man!

CHAPTER II.

More close and close his footsteps wind;
The magic music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
The quiet sleeper, far apart.
His spirit flutters like a lark—
He stoops to kiss her—on his knee
"Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must be!"
TENNYSON.

The married life of Charley Eastman was what might have been expected from his wedding-day. As the years went on, his parents died, and his younger brother married Ellen Clark, the deacon's daughter, and he and Susan were left alone in the old homestead. They had no children. Perhaps they might have loved each other better had such been the case. As it was, they were a quiet, sober couple, living peaceably, if not happily, together, and fast laying up those riches, which to the dreamy Charley, were of little account. He superintended the farm, it is true, but it was evident his heart was not in his work. His happiest hours were spent in the old parlor at home, over his books, or in the house of his brother James. A little child, with dark-blue eyes and sunny hair, often sat upon his knee, while he was there, and prattled to him without fear. His little niece was named Georgia, after the friend Ellen had loved so well. It might be for this reason that he held the child so often upon his knee, and kissed its fair, open forehead.

To Susan, he was always kind and indulgent. No word had ever passed his lips to cause her unhappiness. She thought herself his first and only love, and was perfectly satisfied with the quiet way in which he showed his affection. It was well for her that she could not look into the heart, upon which her head had so often rested. But though Charley could not quite forget the vision that had dawned upon him, only to fade, he never let her suspect his secret—never let her know that in the private drawer of his secretary, a faded and withered white rose, encased in a golden locket, was treasured as the dearest thing he held on earth.

For twelve years, Susan was the presiding divinity of his home; but death comes alike to the busy and the idle. It came to her, while all her household duties were around her. Her husband entered the parlor one morning, where she was lying sick, with a cluster of roses and violets for her. She smiled faintly—

"They are very pretty, Charley—but the rose-leaves are good to dry. I am glad you got them, though."

He stooped down and kissed her, as he laid the flowers upon her pillow. She smiled—put her feeble arm around his neck, and closed her eyes with a sigh of satisfaction. He did not move lest he should disturb her. But by and by the slack arm fell, of its own accord, and the cheek pressed against his own, grew cold. She had gone from him—gone gently, lovingly, and tenderly. He thanked God for that—and that the last act of his during her life had been a kindness and a caress for her. It would be wrong to say he did not mourn for his wife when the grave had covered her from his sight. For twelve years they had never been separated, and he was lonely and lost in his great house, when her coffin was carried out. All the memory of her kindness came up before him too forcibly to be borne. His brother James returned with his family to take possession of the old homestead; and the widower set out on a long and aimless journey—that in seeing new places and persons he might forget his sorrow.

Two years had passed away before he returned. His carriage stopped at the village tavern, whose landlord, though one of his old playmates, failed to recognize him under the disguise of a luxuriant beard and moustache. A sudden whim seized him. He would visit his family as a stranger, and see if they would recognize him. No sooner had he conceived this plan than he hastened to put it in execution.

It was twilight when he lifted the latch of the front yard gate. A boy some six years old was playing among the shrubbery with a little girl of three, in whom Charley had no difficulty in recognizing his pet, little Georgia. He stopped and looked at them.

"Where is your father, my lad?" he asked carelessly.

"My father? He died when I was only a little baby," said the lad, shaking his brown hair from his forehead, and looking up in astonishment. Charley started as he met those deep blue eyes. It was the faithful copy of *her* face that was smiling on him now. He passed his hand over his eyes, indignant at his own weakness.

"If you would like to see my mother," continued the boy, who was uneasy at the stranger's silence, "she is in the parlor yonder," and he pointed to the half-open door. "Shall I show you the way?"

"No—yes," said Charley, hastily, while a wild hope, too wild, he thought, to be real, shot through his heart. "I can find my way, and you must stay here to play with the little girl. What is your name, my boy?"

"Charley, sir."

Charley! His own name! Could it be she had also remembered him? He sprang up the path, and entered the parlor, impatient to know his fate. But he checked himself upon the threshold, as the golden light of the dying day showed him the occupant of the room.

Georgia had been reading, sitting upon a low stool, with her book lying in a great easy chair before her. But the warmth of the day, the solitude of the room, or the stupidity of the author, had sent her sound asleep, and she was lying then before him with her head bowed upon her clasped hands, and resting on the book. He walked softly across the room and stood beside her, so that he could see her face. She looked a little older, but the color on lip and cheek was bright as ever, her brown hair, slightly loosened, had fallen over her white neck, and the hand that lay so listlessly beneath her cheek, was still white, and elegantly formed, and glittering with the diamond which had been her wedding ring. But for the dress of black, and the boy with blue eyes who was playing in the garden, he could scarcely have realized that fourteen years had passed over that graceful head, and slender form—that fourteen years had striven in vain to drive her image from his constant heart.

He forgot that in that very room he had been married to another—that the coffin of his dead wife had rested almost where Georgia was now slumbering so sweetly—he only remembered that the only woman he had ever loved was then before him, and that he was free. He sank down upon his knee and watched her. Her warm, light breath was upon his cheek, intoxicating him with joy. Hardly conscious of what he was doing, he came closer—closer—and pressed his lips to hers in a long lingering kiss. She started in her sleep—he sprang to his feet, and when she opened her eyes, he stood upon the threshold of the open door.

With the kiss, of which she had supposed she dreamed, still lingering upon her lips, she rose hurriedly, and came forward to meet the stranger. In the imperfect light she failed to recognize him. He took the chair she gave him, and sat down beside her.

"Have I the pleasure of speaking to Mrs. Vane, formerly of New York?" he asked, in an assumed voice.

'You have, sir."

"My errand is with you. Have you any recollection of the former owner of this house?"

"Do you mean Char—— Mr. Eastman?" she asked.

'Charley Eastman—yes," replied the stranger. "You remember he went on a long journey, two years ago."

"I do."

"Have you ever heard from him during his absence, Madam?"

"Not directly—though I have sometimes seen his letters to his brother But what do all these questions mean?"

"Be patient, and you shall know. Do you remember his last interview with you, on his wedding-day, some fourteen years ago?"

The widow blushed deeply.

"I do."

"You gave him then a single white rose."

'How came you to know all this—and why do you ask all these questions?" she asked nervously.

"Because I have come to bring you back that rose. It was his wish."

He placed the locket in the hand that was mechanically extended to receive it, and rose as if to go.

"Stay," she gasped—"tell me more."

"He loved you, Mrs. Vane, with all his heart. But he was married, and so were you, and honor kept him silent. What he suffered, only God and himself can know. Keep the rose, if only in respect to the unfortunate passion you inspired."

"Where is he?" she asked eagerly.

The stranger looked at her sadly.

"What if he were dead, Mrs. Vane!"

The color faded from lip and cheek in a moment, and she bent her head upon the faded rose with a bitter cry.

"Dead! dead! And he never knew how I loved him!" In a second, Charley was at her feet.

"Oh, Georgia—my life—my love—can it be possible? Forgive me—I only wished to try my fate. I never dreamed you loved me. Look up, my darling, and smile on me!"

"Charley—Charley, is it indeed you?"

The sudden surprise was too much—she threw her arms around his neck, and wept. It was long before they were calm again.

"But I never dreamed you loved me," repeated Charley, when they were sitting side by side for the first time.

"You never would have known it, had we not both been free," she answered, with a sad smile. "I tried to forget you—I had a kind and gentle husband, and I tried to give him all my thoughts. We were happy, and he loved me dearly. Had he lived—had she lived, I should never have seen you again; but now, thank God—now it is no sin!"

"Thank God, it is no sin!" repeated the happy lover, as he drew her graceful head upon the breast where he had never thought it would lie!

The two brothers still live in the old homestead, and the little Charley and Georgia are constant playmates. It is the dream and hope of Ellen Eastman's life, that they may grow up to love each other—but Georgia, the elder, only smiles at the idea.

And Charley is happy. There are no more vague repinings—no unsatisfied yearnings to torment his heart. His home is a quiet and beautiful spot, and the two children who play around him, are dear as his own could be. But best and brightest of all in his eyes, is that lovely wife, still fair and graceful as when she won his untutored heart in his early years, and loving him with a love that "passeth the love of woman," and fills his life with joy and peace.

◆

SOCIETY.—"Be prosperous and happy, never require our services, and we will remain your friends." This is not what society says, but it is the principle on which it acts.

LIFE'S EARLY DAY.

A Song.

BY C. D. STUART.

O, who has not welcomed in life's early day
The first gleam of Spring-time, the morning of May,
When life was all sunshine, and gladness, and glee,
And storms were but zephyrs just wing'd from the sea,
Which, stealing along over perfum'd parterres,
Awoke every feeling save sadness and tears.

Then the freshness of life was all warm on the cheek,
No object seemed cold, and no prospect look'd bleak,
No fear of the future to sadden the heart,
Or sorrow, unkindness, or grief to impart—
While the newness of life to each moment gave zest—
O, 'tis pity we cannot be always so blest.

But youth, like the dream that our fancy beguiles,
Ne'er heeds the illusion lain hid in its wiles,
Till time comes to tell us its beauty is flown,
Its tinting, its perfume, its brilliancy gone—
And the glow of thepast but adds gloom to the scene,
Render'd dark by the mem'ry of what it has been.

◆

GROWING BEAUTIFUL.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"You remember Kate Maxwell?" said a lady friend, an old acquaintance. We had met at an evening party, and were talking of auld lang syne.

"Very well," I answered. "It would be difficult to forget her homely face."

"How long is it since you saw her?" inquired my friend.

"It must be several years. I think it was in 18— that her family removed from the city."

"Yes, it was in that year."

"It is unfortunate to be so homely," said I.

"A beautiful spirit is more to be desired than a beautiful person," remarked the lady.

"True," I replied. "The eye's brightness, and the skin's pearly lustre are but transient; while the soul's beauty is imperishable. Kate was a good girl, for all her singularly unattractive exterior."

"She had many true friends," said the lady, "and they were all of the better class—better, I mean, in its right sense."

I was about changing the subject of conversation, when my companion directed my attention to a young lady, the centre of a group of three or four ladies and gentlemen. She was talking with some animation, and there was a glow of feeling, and a play of thought in her face, which, though not possessing a feature that might be called handsome, had something in it that was singularly attractive.

"Who is it?" I inquired.

"Don't you know her?" said my friend, smiling.

"The face is quite familiar. I ought to know her. But I am in doubt as to her identity."

"Let me mention her name."

"Do so, if you please."

"Kate Maxwell."

"Impossible! It may be a cousin, or a sister. But not homely Kate Maxwell." I was incredulous.

"It is Kate herself. Hasn't she improved?"

"Wonderfully! Why she is really growing handsome! Has she discovered the fountain of beauty?"

"She has been drinking of its waters for years," replied my earnest friend.

"I must renew our acquaintance," said I. And we walked together across the room. A nearer view was not the breaking of an illusion. The smile of true pleasure that lit up her countenance, as she recognized me, covered every plain feature like a veil of transparent light. How remarkably was she changed!

Later in the evening, I had a quiet talk with her—first about old times, and then upon a variety of themes suggested by the occasion, or coming into thought spontaneously. What an exquisite perception of things true and beautiful she had! Her thought was lucid as crystal. But most apparent was her interest in all things pure and good in our common humanity. In speaking of others she seemed to take a peculiar delight in magnifying their excellencies.

Present, in that company, was another maiden, whom I had known for years. She and Kate had been intimate before the latter removed to another city. They were much together, and people of a certain class used to say that Nancy Lee was incapable of a sincere friendship for any one, and only associated intimately with Kate Maxwell, in order that she might have a foil to her beauty. This was stating the case a little too strongly, and the remark had its origin in a certain smartness of speech cultivated by many persons, and which is very nearly allied to ill-nature. Nancy Lee had regular features, and a face narrowed to fine oval. Her lips were moderately full, and of faultless outline; her chin slightly prominent; her neck queenly; her eyes dark, large and lustrous, with long fringing lids that lay like shadowy lines upon her cheeks. Every one pronounced her beautiful at a glance; and those who met her for the first time, turned to gaze at her again. And yet the oftener you looked into her face, the less satisfied were you with its beauty. Something was lacking. It was not that you felt, as when looking at a statue, that soul was wanting; for taking up the sculptor's ideal, thought creates a soul even more beautiful in its diviner attributes than the chisseled marble: but, it was the glimpses of the soul, less beautiful than its investure, caught now and then through revealing expressions, that was forever disappointing the half entranced beholder.

The beauty of Nancy Lee did not grow upon you. The more intimately you became acquainted with her, the more indifferent did you become to her personal attractions. As she stood beside Kate Maxwell again, after the lapse of four years, the beauty of the one, and the exceeding plainness of the other, did not strike you as remarkable. That conscious beauty, which is really so unbeautiful, was eclipsed by the unconscious soul-beauty in the face of the lovelier maiden.

Almost involuntarily I made the two countenances a study. In all the physical elements of beauty, taking feature by feature, and comparing one with the other, the contrast was ludicrously against the homelier one. A single instance will show this—as in the long, dark lashes of the one, and the thin white lashes of the other, that did not even hide the coral-tinted lids. But, looking away from single features, and from mere physical elements, and the beauty of the former lost much of its power, while the lack of beauty in the other ceased to appear as a defect. In the conversation of Nancy Lee I found nothing of interest. Her mind seemed to be asleep to all but the little outside world of fashion and pleasure. But every word that fell from the lips of Kate Maxwell stirred some thought in my mind, or sent some newly awakened ripple, glittering in sunshine, over the waters of feeling.

Not in my eyes alone was the change in our gentle friend apparent. All of her old acquaintances were struck with it, and from more than one, I heard the remark—

"Really, Kate Maxwell is growing beautiful!"

And so she was, with a beauty imperishable as eternity.

"How is it," said a young man, who had known Kate during her former residence in the city, but had not been over attentive to her—he was not then old enough, or wise enough to see below the mere surface, and distinguish between the real and the apparent. "How is it, that Kate Maxwell compares so much more favorably now with her '*foil*,' as we used to call her, than she did a few years ago? I do not see that the color of her hair or eye-brows is at all improved, nor that her nose has gained a single classic outline, nor that her complexion is better. And yet she is no longer a foil to Nancy Lee, but holds her own in the comparison. I think Nancy has changed some. There is an expression in her face that repels rather than attracts—a homeliness of feeling, so to speak, that is to me repulsive. On the contrary, I have looked into Kate's face more than once this evening, when it seemed radiant with beauty. What does it mean?"

My lady friend, of whom I spoke in the beginning, was present, and as I perceived her face brightening, I thought it best to let her answer the query.

"You saw," she replied, with the fine enthusiasm of her character, "the soul shining through the body's transparent veil—a veil that, strive as we may to render it opaque, grows thinner and thinner as our true life gains strength, until it no longer hides the spirit's true quality, but suffers it to reveal itself in beauty or deformity. Some people grow plainer as they grow older, and some more lovely in exterior. Need I state the reason?"

"No," said the young man, into whose mind a flood of light seemed breaking. "The reason is apparent enough. Only the good are really beautiful."

"Truly spoken," was answered. "The fabled fountain of eternal youth and beauty is the fountain of celestial love, drinking at which we grow more and more into the likeness of those radiant ones, whose highest joy is found in doing good. The origin of beauty is not in nature—there we see only its perishing form, and we are ever marring it by evil passion and selfish desire. But, why need I seek to illustrate what is so self-evident? Your own words carry with them an undoubting conviction. Only the good are really beautiful."

After this brief conversation, I noticed that the young man, who had hardly been civil to Kate a few years before, kept close to her side during the remainder of the evening. It was plain that, in his eyes, she was growing more and more beautiful every moment.

I did not meet this gentle friend again for three years, though I could not fail to hold her in pleasant remembrance, and then it was as the bride of the young man just referred to, who had a soul capable of appreciating that true beauty which fades not in the corroding atmosphere of time. In this new relation to life, Kate had returned to her native town, and I met her at a large party given on the wedding occasion by the friends of her husband. She was standing in a group of ladies as I entered the crowded rooms, and so changed in three years that I was in doubt as to her identity. At the last meeting I had not perceived any change in the physical lines of beauty, but only a shining through the plain face of her beautiful spirit. But her soul had a freer, outward development, as well as a more interior life. The deep joy of loving and being beloved had awakened new delights that pervaded her whole being, and recorded themselves in every feature and expression. Love had become her very life, and its transforming power was seen in the gradual softening of harsher outlines, and in touches of beauty here and there, scarcely recognized each by itself, but pleasing the sight in their combined harmonies. I said that she was standing in a group of ladies as I entered the room. One of these was Nancy Lee, also a bride, and in all her bridal attractions. She had loaded herself with ornaments, and was dressed in a showy costume, all intended to heighten her personal charms. She stood in the eyes of all a conscious beauty, and her young husband felt very proud at being the possessor of so much loveliness. But few, I think, envied him who were capable of appreciating the soul-beauty of Kate, so strongly contrasted with the mere flesh and blood beauty of his bride, as she stood, unconscious of a single personal attraction, by the side of her old friend and companion. The effect of the two faces, as transformed by living affections, was remarkable.

From that time I met the two young brides often, and could always see new evidences of the changing power of their interior lives. To the one I was attracted, from the other repelled. The one appeared to grow less selfish, and more lovely all the while; the other more worldly-minded, more heartless, and more unpleasing to the eye. Contentment enthroned itself on the brow of one; discontent on that of the other.

It is now ten years since their bridal, and ever since, this change has been progressing—Kate growing lovelier all the while, and her old friend fading into a coarse, showy, sensual beauty; a seeker of that admiration which is deceived by cosmetic arts. At home, in the eyes of her husband, the latter scarcely exhibits a single personal charm, so completely has her spirit transfixed itself into her face; while in the home of Kate, everything seems to have taken a portion of beauty from her beautiful soul, to reflect it back upon her as from a mirror. Daily, hourly, momently, she is growing more beautiful; and this will progress until she attains the transcendant loveliness of an angel. Only strangers, at a first meeting, see her face as a plain one. To her friends it is always full of attractions, for every feature is an index and a remembrance of spiritual graces that adorn her life and render her a true friend, loving companion, and teacher by example of those sweet virtues that are born of a diviner influence.

◆

ROBERT ALLAN.

Oh! the haughty, Arab-blackness
Of the wild locks curling low,
O'er the brow of Robert Allan,
That is whiter than the snow!
Oh! the eyes of shadowy splendor,
Dark and haunting as the night,—
Oh! the dainty lids that ever
Keep away the morning light!

Pale the young hands, full of roses,
Lie upon his shrouded breast—
And the young face smiles serenely
With the beauty of his rest!
Sleep, oh, lost one! never waken,
Till you feel my hand in yours—
And you hear my footsteps falling
Mid the never-dying flowers.

EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

◆

LOVE.—Humboldt notices that the streams in America run languidly in the night, and await the rising of the sun to quicken their flight. Love is to the heart what the sun is to our American streams—it moves languidly in its absence.

◆

SHORT MEMORIES.—There are no memories so short as those of the parvenu, and the ungrateful man; the first forgets himself, and the second his friends.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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REJECTED MANUSCRIPTS.—We will not return rejected manuscripts

NO SUCH WORD AS FAIL.

Doubtless a deeper feeling of individual responsibility, and a better adaptation of talent to its fields of labor, are necessary to bring about a better state of society, and a better condition for the individual members of it. But with the most careful adaptation of talent and means to pursuits, no man can succeed, as a general principle, who has not a fixed and resolute purpose in his mind, and an unwavering faith that he can carry that purpose out. It is the taking hold of the plough and looking back at the furrow, instead of forward to the unbroken sod, that causes so many failures. There is, with a great majority of men, a want of constancy in whatever plans they undertake. They toil as though they doubted that life had earnest and decided pathways; as though there was no compass but the shifting winds, with each of which they must change their course. Thus they beat about on the ocean of time, but never cross it, to rest on delightful islands or mainlands.

Those who are familiar with the Scottish history will remember the incident which inspired the faltering Bruce to become the saviour of his country. Lying in a shed, despairing over his fate, he saw a spider striving to reach the ceiling by a slender web. Again and again the resolute insect struggled up and fell backward. But the ceiling was its desired goal, and it returned each time with greater vigor to the trial. Obstacles only stimulated it, and at length it triumphed. The despairing Bruce made the faithful instinct of the spider his lesson—it gave him a new inspiration, and he went forth to beat back the Saxon invaders, to triumph over England, and to become a hero and a king.

It is this spirit of earnest, hopeful, and constant faith that man wants in pursuing the object he has set before him. His motto must be "There is no such word as fail." No man ever rose to fortune, or to fame,—save chance exceptions, scarcely creditable in themselves—without encountering obstacles, and at times almost despairing of his toil. It is the great virtue and glory of life to buffet the wave and breast the storm, and he who does it with a good purpose is surely rewarded. Suppose Columbus had yielded to the mutinous spirits around him, in his search for a new hemisphere—suppose the mariner, with his sails bent for gold coasts or spice islands, was to surrender to every cross current or baffling wind, would the new hemisphere have been found, or the gold coasts and spice islands be gained? Life, with every man, is a barque on the sea of time. Every man is a voyager and has a port to gain. He selects his port, and he must start with undeceiving compass, and, against wind and tide, bear on to that port, or he will never reach it. With the brave, considerate soul there is no such word as "fail."

HIDING THE BEAUTIFUL.

We have often thought that some of the wealthy citizens of taste among us, who have accumulated fine galleries of paintings, statuary, medals, &c.,—many of them *chefs d'œuvres*—could afford lovers of the beautiful in art great gratification, and do public taste a benefit, by rendering their art treasures accessible, under proper restrictions, to such as desire and would delight in examining them. Such is very largely the habit of a similar class in the Old World—particularly in England, whose nobility and gentry are nearly all patrons and possessors of choice works of art. It seems to us that it should be a matter of pride on the part of those owning fine galleries, to have them seen as largely as possible by appreciative persons. But whether so or not, it is due to art, as it is to the beautiful and those who enjoy it, not to hide away in a private collection immortal creations of the artist—creations valuable in proportion as they are a source of admiration and enjoyment to mankind. Rare works of art—save only private portraits—belong really, whoever may possess the canvass, or the marble, to the world. For the world the genius of art was inspired to create them. If some of our merchant princes would think of this, and help broaden the avenues to the beautiful in art, it would be a feature of liberality and taste elevating to the character of our city. It would remind the world of the golden era of Greece, when the poet rehearsed to the multitude in the groves; when the philosopher freely taught wisdom to all from the porch of the temple; when the painter and sculptor wrought their glorious works to win the admiration of the people—of mankind. Then the beautiful was not hidden, but revealed.

IN OUR NEXT NUMBER we will commence Mr. Cobb's new story. It is a tale in the preparation of which the author has taken especial pains; and he is himself of the opinion that it is the best story he has ever written. We have ourselves read it with a great deal of pleasure, and fully agree with him. But, next week, our readers will see it, and then they can judge for themselves.

VIRTUE.—The virtue that repels by its severity, makes few converts; but that which attracts by its charity, incites all to esteem, if not to follow its precepts.

SORROW.—Sorrow is to youth what experience is to maturity.

NEEDS OF THE REPUBLIC.

Never was there a time when the United States had more need and reason for multiplying her means of communication with, and strengthening her name and influence throughout the civilized world than at present. Not that she is overtly threatened in any quarter. From her example Freedom has found on every continent revolutions of people in its favor, and its seeds, planted and nursed in many lands, are pushing deeper and wider every day, and it is the duty as well as the policy of our country to fortify her position as the encourager of this universal world against old bondage. She is the mother of modern revolution, wherever it tends to emancipate from kingly and institutional fetters; and she would be a hypocrite and a coward not to acknowledge her progeny, and do all in her power to render them vigorous and free as herself.

We can conceive of no single means so fraught with power and inbuence to our Republic as the proper increase of its ocean steam marine; at once an agent to gather wealth, and bear our name, flag, and ideas, wherever its keels touch mainlands or islands, impressing, in proportion to its numbers and the frequency of their communication, nations, races and tribes, with a sense of our freedom, greatness and power. The interests of our commerce, as well as the spreading of the national policy—let alone the duty we are under of making known to an oppressed world the good we enjoy as a people—demand that we widen and multiply our means of correspondence, intercourse, and traffic with every quarter of the globe.

Our empire now crosses a continent, bathing its sides in two oceans; and from its natural as well as political position, may grasp the sceptre of commerce, and, in point of influence, the balance of power among the nations. The United States has plied triumphantly the work of political conversion in Europe, both by her ideas and her enterprise at home, and her commerce and relations abroad, and only the *will* is required to render her more persuasive among the Asiatic races, to whom she now bears such near and friendly proximity. But her advance in political power, will depend upon her commerce and intercourse with the world. Where she cannot penetrate with her trade and ideas, by careful policy, no nation can penetrate, for she has a prestige in the respect and friendship of the world, before all other nations.

We ought this day to have regular and frequent national mail communication, followed by commercial adventure as a natural result, with every State of South America; with all European nations bordering upon the oceans and their navigable tributaries; with Siberia, with Australia, with the Sandwich Isands, and most certainly with India, China, and Japan. Even if a portion of it were for a period a tax upon the Republic, it would be far better than to spend her money, as is often done, for that which enhances neither our wealth, our power, nor our reputation; and it would, at the worst, return a vast profit in the extension of our influence, perchance in regions where Freedom only awaits the planting of a small seed by us.

A GREAT MISTAKE.

No greater mistake could well be made than that involved in the estimate too often set upon the intelligence of our mechanics, artizans, and working men in general. Few are so hardy as to deny this "bone and sinew" class great practical good sense, but many imagine that learning, and refinement of thought and feeling, can have little to do with men and women who earn their bread by the sweat of the brow. From experience and observation we have formed an entirely different opinion. Among our mechanics and artizans are some of the most brilliant intellects—men of humble pretensions, as all men of true genius and solid knowledge are—men who are versed in art, science, literature and languages, and whose power of appreciating the beautiful and sublime, is in nowise lessened because their hands are browned and hardened by honest labor.

Of the discoveries in science, and the inventions in art—in this most wonderful of inventive ages—the majority of achievements are traceable to men of the class to whom this exception of high intelligence is made. In a country where education is open to all, where a sense of equality is inherent in every bosom, and where ambition to excel in intellectual accomplishments is more likely to be palled by wealth than dampened by toil, what can be more ridiculous than to suppose learning and refinement inimical to any condition of honest labor? Such a supposition is a libel on the character of the vital life of our population. The names of Whitney, Morse, Hoe, McCormick, and scores of others we could mention, constitute a roll of men of the first genius, born of the humbler, toiling ranks. The printer Franklin, the shoemaker Sherman, and the blacksmith Burritt, are examples in point—who has transcended them in triumph, as men of sense, science, and diversified learning?

AN EDITORIAL MONSTER REBUKED.

"There is too much alms-giving now-a-days; and there are too many benevolent societies also. Let every man take care of himself, and then everybody will be provided for. We are heartily tired of this eternal crying of 'give! give!' and the sight of a contribution box makes us sick."—*Springfield paper.*

This editor is evidently in a highly bilious state and needs depleting. A sparse bread-and-water diet for a few months, with frequent intervals of starvation, would probably reduce his bile and place his sympathies on a sound basis. The best way, perhaps, to cure that weakness of the stomach which is so easily stirred by the sight of a contribution box, would be to reduce him for a while to the necessity of exhibiting one of those harmless utensils on his own behalf. Even the now offensive cry of "give! give!" might become tolerable to his sensitive ears, if uttered from his own starving throat, or wailed out by his own suffering little ones. But what is the use of talking to such a man about "suffering little ones?" He is undoubtedly some wizzened, selfish, rusty, musty, dusty old bachelor, whose heart has turned to sponge and his blood to vinegar. Let the old cruet gurgle away.

UNGALLANT AND UNTRUE.

"For our part," says a writer in a daily paper, "we have come to the determination never again to give up our seat to a lady in ferryboat, railroad car, omnibus or stagecoach. It is a *false politeness* which demands such sacrifices on the part of gentlemen."

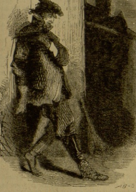
That writer's idea of politeness is as weak as his gallantry. In the first place, there is no such thing as "*false* politeness," any more than there is false truth. Politeness is politeness the world over; but we need go no further than the writer of the above paragraph to discover that there are people who do not know what politeness is and often mistake something else for it. And further; it is no "sacrifice" to a *gentleman* to behave kindly and politely to a woman. A *gentleman* is always glad to do a woman a service; to him, it would be a far greater "sacrifice" to be compelled to sit in a public vehicle while a woman was standing up, than to offer her his seat.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

FOR THE CHILDREN
WHO READ THE NEW YORK LEDGER.

Oh, what a cold night it was! The wind blew round the corners strong enough to lift you off your feet; and the stars glittered over head so brightly, that it seemed as if the sun could never again quench out their beams. It was very late; between one and two o'clock. Every body who had a shelter had gone to find it. Not even a dog would willingly have crept out on such a bitter night; and yet there stood a man, apparently as insensible to its fury as the wall he leaned against; his cap was crowded down over his forehead, and his coat-collar turned up, so that you could see but little of his face, except a pair of large eyes that gleamed like fire-coals. Now and then he would dart forward, as his ear caught the sound of footsteps, and then he would sink back again into his old position, and his upraised arm would fall powerless by his side. Still the stars glittered overhead, and the wild wind howled past him; but a wilder struggle was in the young man's soul.



Far off, over the blue sea, was an humble English home. Under its roof this man's youth had passed with his kind old mother; their wants were few, for their tastes were simple. Many an evening you might have heard the lad singing the hymn his mother taught him, or reading from that Book which brings wealth to the poorest cabin. But the time came on, as the lad grew to manhood, when the walls of his home, dearly as he loved them, seemed all too narrow for his restless spirit. He would go to America—where fortune was kinder to the young and hopeful, and bring back to her, who had for so many years clothed and fed him, comfort and plenty for her last days. There was another—young and hopeful like himself, who was not afraid to bear him company on life's journey. And so the two, man and wife, rich only in each other's strong love, bent their heads for the withered hand of blessing; and as their mother's tremulous tones fell upon their ears, "Remember your mother's God," the young man's stifled "aye—aye," seemed to take the load from off her heart, and make it hopeful as his own.

And so farewell was said, and the strong vessel glided over the blue waters, and battled with its huge waves as a child would play with a mimic boat. There were rough old sailors on board, and fragile women, and delicate little children; each and all had strong ties to life; fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, whom they had left behind, or were going to meet. But John and his young wife were company enough for each other; they could fancy no evil that could befal them, while God spared them, and their old mother, to each other. It does not take as long time as it used to cross the ocean; the voyage was soon made—the ship's passengers all went their various ways—and the young couple, full of hope, landed on the quay at New York to seek their fortune. Day after day John walked the crowded streets in search of employment, and always with a stout heart under each discouragement, until the little sum he had carefully hoarded for present use grew less and less, and employment seemed further off than ever.

There is no wilderness so solitary to the friendless and poor as the bustling hum of a strange city. You look into people's faces and wonder that they can be so indifferent whether you starve. You know that your death, at any minute, would be no more to that busy, laughing throng than a pebble tossed into a lake. You wonder why so many should riot in plenty, while you long for the crumbs that fall from their tables. Bitter, despairing thoughts take possession of you. You forget that God reigns, or doubt His goodness.

So it was with poor John on that dreary night on which he stood in the street, unmindful of the biting cold. Time had passed on, as I have told you, and another mouth had come to John to be fed; and his wife, and his little babe, lay shivering in a miserable garret, without fire, without food, and alas! without hope; slowly—surely dying of want and cold. John looked on till he could bear it no longer; and on the night of which I speak, he kissed his wife and babe, and muttering wild words of "plenty" fled from the house—he knew not whither. Food he must have—others had it—why not he? Must the wife he so dearly loved perish before his eyes, with her innocent babe upon her breast? There was gold enough in that great city; he had tried to earn some honestly—now, he *would* have it, at any rate—*even, if need be, at the cost of life!* And so as I told you, there he stood, with his hat slouched over his eyes, and his rough coat-collar turned up over his face, as if he could hide even from himself his guilty purpose. And now there came along a young man, well-dressed, light-hearted, singing gaily as he went home from some place of evening amusement. Why should *he* sing? John was young, too; but was not want and misery his portion—and what was worse, the portion of those whom he loved? This thought nerved again the arm that had fallen powerless by his side, and with a stealthy step he is at the young man's side to strike him down. Why does he not do it?—why does he stand looking at him with those strange, wild, tearless eyes? There is no witness there against him but the glittering stars. No human voice has spoken. And yet, clear upon the midnight air ring out these well-remembered words—

"Forget not your mother's God."

Oh, child of many prayers! across the wide blue sea, a pious mother's arms have girt thee round!

And now you ask me what became of John, and his wife, and the baby; and I ask *you*, does God ever forget those who, when fearfully tried and tempted, at last remember him? No, never! John told the young man that his intention was to steal—perhaps to kill him: he told him with streaming eyes of his starving wife and babe. Youth is fearless, generous and sympathetic, and the plenty which God had given the young man he fully shared with John and his famished household.

Little children—the night may be long and dreary, but to the weariest watcher, the day will surely break. FANNY FERN.

LABOR.

There is a vast amount of foolish discussion and false sentiment in regard to the respectability of labor professions. Every industrial pursuit that is honest and promotive of human well-being, is respectable, honorable, and dignified. The chimney-sweeper is only a vulgar laborer, and his calling a mean one, when he sinks below and demeans his toil. Let him pursue his work steadily and earnestly, and he is entitled to as much respect as the telescope maker. The profession of labor has no essential merit in itself, beyond being more or less productive; the merit belongs entirely to the manner of its pursuit.

Some pride themselves on living above and independent of labor, scorning all its pursuits as low and ignoble. Such are drones, who eat what they do not earn, and it is sufficient punishment for them that they can see nothing in their desire or destiny but an utter antipode to the generally revealed character of God and man. Others pride themselves upon the exclusiveness or aristocracy of a profession, as though honor and dignity came to labor from isolation instead of usefulness. These would call labor honorable, in proportion as they could handle it without soiling their gloves. It is hard to say which of the two is most vulgar, he who decries and scorns all labor that is soiled or soiling—all common, every day toil—or he who values labor only as it is begrimed with dirt, and turns up his nose at the man who works with hands and face cleaner than his own. Both are immensely vulgar, and both will have to learn much before they truly understand the nature and dignity of honest labor.

IDLERS.

Thomas Carlyle has said, somewhere in his voluminous works, that the world has "one monster—the idle man." Who can doubt it?

Young man, are *you* an idler? Are you consenting, under some pretext or other, to live on the earnings of others? Do you plead "bad health," while they are feebler than you? Are you spending your hours in utter idleness, while even your mother and sisters are pricking their fingers with the needle, or skinning them at the wash-tub, to keep you in bread and butter, and hide your lazy carcass with decent clothes? We have *known* some young men (?) as mean as this.

Arouse yourself, young man! Shake off the wretched and disgraceful habits of the do-nothing, if you have been so unfortunate as to incur them, and go to work at once!

"But what shall I do?" you perhaps ask. *Anything*, rather than continue in dependent, and enfeebling, and demoralizing idleness. If you can get nothing else to do, sweep the streets. But perhaps you are "ashamed" to do that. If so, your shame has been very slow in manifesting itself, seeing how long you have been acting, on life's great stage, the despicable parts of drone and loafer, *without* shame!

Idler! Take the foregoing home to yourself. Don't try to persuade yourself that the cap doesn't fit you. Honestly acknowledge its fitness. It will be a great point gained, to become honest with yourself. It will be a step forward—a step towards that justice to others which your present conduct absolutely ignores!

ROGUES AND RICHES.

The speculations of titled nobles and princes of royal blood in Europe, which have for some years been carried on without regard to expense, morals or consequences, are now beginning to collapse, or at least to grow difficult of management; and some of the parties, becoming frightened, grab a few loose millions, and rush to "the land of the brave and the home of the free." Over ten millions of dollars have thus been brought to this country within two years, and it is asserted that the game is yet only in its incipient stage—that, in all probability, we shall yet have nearly all of Louis Napoleon's cabinet ministers running over here with their plethoric money-bags, and English noblemen, and Russian, Austrian and Prussian counts and dukes, by the score, following suit. If these predictions prove true, we may expect an incomputable increase of our wealth and immorality set off by the high-bred manners and adorned with the beauty and elegance of what now constitute the "first society" of the Old World. If these gentry imagine, however, that they can compete with our indigenous rogues in the game of swindling, they will find themselves egregiously mistaken. A New York sharper is honed down to the keenest possible edge of "cuteness." As the subtle temper of Saladin's famous cimeter enabled it to divide a piece of gauze floating in the air, so the self-possessed sharpness of a Gotham "operator" enables him to shave through the most impalpable stocks with the gravity and assurance of a Yankee housewife paring pumpkins.

NAMES.

Many of the Christian names in use have a significance which is striking—often, indeed, very beautiful. Take for examples, Theodore and Dorethea, which is mainly a reversed spelling, which meant *the gift of God* among the Greeks, who originated them; Augustus and Felix, by which the Romans intended to signify *great*, and *happy*; and Andrew, Robert, Charles, and Edward among names of a more modern origin, meaning respectively, *bold*, *wise-in-council*, *stout-hearted*, and *happy-keeper*—the last being purely Anglo-Saxon. The use of the prefix "Ed" (happy) in Edwin, a *happy conqueror*, Edgar, a *happy-peace*, &c., is beautifully available.

Take the following feminine names: Isabel means a *beautiful* brown color, the origin being Spanish, and the same as of Isabella, worn by the present queen of that country; Emma, *a nurse;* Eliza, *a vow;* Agnes, *chaste;* and Mabel, *my beautiful.*

But there are some draw-backs to these names for ladies, such as Julia, soft-bearded; Penelope, a turkey-hen; and Ursula, a she-bear; and we may possibly render a timely service to some mothers, among the readers of the LEDGER, by thus calling attention to this subject, and so preventing the selection of uninviting and inappropriate names for their unchristened babes.

ROUGH MEN.—Rough men have all their seams on the outside; and they rub against and incommode those who come in contact with them.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—BY GEO. D. PRENTICE, ESQ., OF THE LOUISVILLE JOURNAL.

WE are no admirers of autobiography. It is generally made up by a man's drawing a portrait of himself, carefully omitting all the bad features he has, and putting in all the good ones he has not, so as to insure a faithful likeness. No man's life is complete till he is dead, an autobiography seems therefore a *misnomer*. Perhaps, however, this objection is removed by the fact that such works generally fall still-born from the press, so that an author may be said to have lost his life as soon as he is delivered of it.

A WRITER has no right to take his articles to an editor and insist on his reading and deciding upon them in his presence. Let the remark of Dr. Johnson be borne in mind. "You must consider beforehand that your effusions may be bad as well as good; and nobody has a right to put another under such a difficulty that he must either hurt the person by telling the truth, or hurt himself by telling what is not true."

MR. JOHN ADAMS, a Post Master in Texas, has been detected in embezzlement. Three of his clerks proved to have been involved with him.

"In Adam's fall
They sinned all."

IT is said to be an unsettled point whether the mails or the females give us the most trouble—the latter by keeping us writing letters all the time, or the former by not delivering them.

THE comet lately passed near the constellation of the Great Bear. Since then its tail is said to be considerably shortened. If the bear bit it off, all the planets of the solar system should honor Bruin with a vote of thanks.

WE do not know whether the famous question, "Will saltpetre explode?" is likely to be settled, but the hard times in the West have certainly caused the explosion of two entire saltpetre establishments.

AN Ohio politician was boasting in a public speech that he could bring an argument to a p'int as quick as any other man. "You can bring a quart to a pint a good deal quicker," replied a Kentucky editor.

SQUATTER sovereignty has been defined to be the entrance of six full-dressed ladies into a large omnibus, and their occupation thereof, to the exclusion of fourteen gentlemen of ordinary dimensions.

A CONTEMPORARY of ours says that "some editors are always trying to be witty and often fail." His readers might add that others seem always trying to be stupid and never fail.

IT is often dangerous to undertake to set two fellows to fighting. Take a couple of dogs and thrust their cold noses against each other's teeth, and it may be that dog wont eat dog but turn on *you*.

A NEW ORLEANS paper of last January boasted that gold was as plenty there as blackberries. The editor forgot to tell how abundant blackberries are in New Orleans in midwinter.

A WESTERN editor closes a pretty long article by saying, "We have no rum for further remarks to-day." He had better send out and get some if he can't manage to write without it.

JOHN T. FROST, of Donaldsonville, has had to pay a man five hundred dollars for biting off his nose. That's more than men generally get for having their noses bitten by Jack Frost.

IT is a very common thing to abuse lawyers. Briefless lawyers, however, should always be excepted. It would be very wrong to speak ill of any man *without a cause*.

UNDOUBTEDLY toleration is an excellent thing, but there might be some difficulty in settling the question whether true toleration should be tolerant toward intolerance.

A YOUNG widow has established a pistol gallery in New Orleans. Her qualifications as a teacher of the art of duelling are of course undoubted, for she has *killed her man*.

THE botanists tell us that there is no such thing in nature as a black flower. We suppose they never heard of the "coal black Rose."

A MAN recently got married in Kentucky one day and hung himself the next. No doubt he wanted to try all varieties of nooses to see which he liked best.

THE Southern World, a new paper started in Mississippi, lasted just three weeks.

"And now a bubble bursts, and now a world."

"DOES not the tolling of that bell put you in mind of your last end?" said a traveler to his companion. "No, but the rope puts me in mind of yours."

A CANADA editor says he has "a keen rapier to prick all fools and knaves." His friends, if they are prudent, will take it from him. He might commit suicide.

A LADY said to her husband that she had read the art of love just to make herself agreeable to him. "I had rather have your love without the art," he replied.

AN inquisitive priest, having asked a young lady her name in the confessional, she replied, "Father, my name is not a sin."

BALLADS have been called vocal portraits of the national mind. The people that are without them may literally be said not to be worth an old song.

A CRITIC says of a late volume of poetry, that it is "*unutterably* stupid." Pity it hadn't been.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A COUPLE of neighbors, named Norton and Briggs, living in the town of Clinton, Vt., having a difficulty concerning a loss sustained by the latter on account of a fire kindled by the former on his farm spreading and running over a portion of the latter's land, became at last mutually incensed at each other to such a degree that the matter could not be amicably adjusted by their friends. This being the state of affairs, Briggs, several nights since, proceeded to Norton's house after the latter had retired, and called him to the door. Norton went out, when Briggs threw one arm around his body and instantly commenced stabbing him in the abdomen, breast and face. After sating his vengeance, he left his victim in a dying state and fled. He was soon arrested, however, and is now confined in jail.

MR. PETER KOONS, a respectable farmer of Richmondville, aged about forty years, went into his barn a few days since, to feed his stock, and in throwing some hay from the mow dropped his pitchfork, which fell fork down upon the floor into which the tines fastened so as to hold the handle in a perpendicular position. In descending from the mow to regain the implement, Mr. Koons slipped, and, falling a distance of fifteen feet, struck upon the end of the handle of the pitchfork, which entered his body, and passing up through the bowels, diaphragm, and lungs, was stopped by the shoulder blade. The unfortunate man lived, in unspeakable agony, for about forty-eight hours, and was then relieved by death.

A LAMENTABLE tragedy occurred in the village of Union, in this state, a short time since. A man named Jared Barton, aged about eighteen years, was instantly killed by Charles Latourrette, who is subject to fits of insanity, and who, while there was a paroxysm upon him, went into a store, snatched a dagger from a showcase, rushed into the street, and stabbed Barton, who was standing near the store, to the heart.

A LITTLE girl, five years of age, the daughter of a widow lady named Wilkinson, living in Williamsburg, was severely bitten by a large rat a few weeks ago, and has since died from the effects of the wound. It may not be generally known that the rat, being accustomed to feed upon all sorts of garbage, poisons its teeth, and that wounds inflicted by them are sometimes in a high degree dangerous.

EXTENSIVE fires have been raging recently in the woods of Clinton County (N. Y.), and in some instances the barns and dwellings of the farmers have been consumed, and also the sleepers and ties of the railroad tracks running through the forest. In one instance, the dwelling of a Mr. Hurley was burned, and his daughter, aged twelve years, perished in the flames.

THE superintendent of the poor in Washington county in this State gives an account of a woman in that county who was attacked by epileptic fits about a year ago, and who for the last *eleven months* has taken no nourishment excepting a small amount of water and apple-sauce. This is the most remarkable case of longevity without food on record.

AT a row which took place not long since among a mob of men on Wood River, near Alton, Illinois, a man seized a gun and shot at one of his assailants. The ball passed clear through and killed the man at whom the gun was aimed, and mortally wounded another man who was standing behind him.

A BOY only ten years of age was recently arraigned in this city for ill-treating a little girl only six years old in an outrageous and unmentionable manner. If our boys are thus precocious in crime and brutality, what can we expect our men to be?

RIGHT AND WRONG.

BY ALICE CARY.

The sunflower doth not know the way
  Her god shall come, so well as we
The road of Right; yet every day
  We deal with conscience crookedly

Making pretence of ignorance,
  Of fealty to the law within,
And cunningly educing thence
  The liberty of secret sin.

That we may step at pleasure, back
  From Wrong, all ministers of might
We have enrolled, to make its track
  Run straightly parallel with Right.

* * *

THE WIDOW OF TOLEDO.

A TALE OF

"LOW BIRTH AND IRON FORTUNE."

Y DR. S. P. BRONSON.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XVIII.—Continued.

The following morning, the minister desired a detailed history of the Count de Vega's life and duties on the widow's estate; after which he dismissed him as before, with a request to "call again to-morrow."

On the morning of the fourth day, Ramirez spoke not a word of the count's personal affairs, but gently drew him out into a general conversation on the most politic lines of conduct in reference to the government of individuals, then of society, and then of the State; at the conclusion of which he bade him call again on the morrow.

On the fifth day, the minister resumed the topics discussed at the previous interview, taking them up, one by one, and sounding the count's views to their lowest bases, and softly leading him out on peace, war, finance, justice, commerce, agriculture, and endeavoring, but vainly, to take him beyond his depth. But the meditations of three-and-twenty years had not been in vain to the count, who, as he gathered confidence, was soon able to return the intellectual cunning of the minister with wit equally as bold and keen, and at times to lure him into positions from which with all his skill he found it impossible to extricate himself. At the close of the debate, Ramirez was fain mentally to confess that while on nearly all points he had encountered a foeman worthy of his steel, on many he had been most vigorously vanquished. It was the same the next day, and the day after, and the day following that, by which time the count had got fairly warmed up, when the minister came to the unflattering conviction that for once in his life he had found a rival who was more than his peer. And still he dismissed the anxious nobleman from day to day with, "That will do for the present; call again at this hour to-morrow!"

This was the state of affairs when Leon made his triumphant entry into the capital, and by that bold achievement became at once the wonder and the admiration of every tongue.

The count called at the palace of the prime minister on the following morning with a proud step.

"So, sir," said Ramirez, with affected severity, "not content with shaming my administration by bidding me defiance in person for three-and-twenty years, you must make a crowning stroke to show the imbecility of my mounted police, who have been trying five years to perform what you, through your son, have accomplished in a single night."

"Your lordship gives me too much credit," said the count, perceiving the state of his mind. "I had no knowledge of my boy's relinquishment of his post, none of his imprisonment in the mountain, and still less of his design to capture his captors."

"Umph—perhaps not. But you are not sorry for it, I presume?"

"I certainly do not regret, my lord, that my gallant boy's first essay in life has been of marked service to himself and to the State."

"Donna Isabella de la Montera!" said the usher.

The minister seeing the count start, held up his finger to the usher, while he asked—

"Does the senora know you?"

"I cannot tell, my lord. It is some years ——"

"Then remain where you are. She will not recognize you in your friar's gown. Admit the lady," he added to the usher.

"Am I too bold, my lord?" demanded the widow, pausing almost at the threshold, and glancing at the stranger with an air of diffidence.

"The widow of my lamented friend cannot think so," answered the minister, gallantly. "But how is it that one to whom I am under so many obligations absents herself from my poor house so long? Believe me, we had rather see you oftener, lady."

"You are very kind, my lord. I have come to request your favor towards one who has come to the capital to try his fortunes."

"You have but to wish it, senora, and whatever assistance I can give him shall be freely rendered. His name?"

"Leon ——"

"His majesty, the king!" interrupted the usher.

"The lady here to exert her influence for my son!" muttered de Vega, in astonishment. "What can this mean?"

"Good morrow, my lord!" said the king, hurriedly entering the cabinet. "Ah! you are not alone?" he added, bowing gracefully to the lady and the friar. "Let me not disturb you. While taking my morning ride, I thought I could not do less than step in to inquire how my faithful servant has passed the night."

"Happily, I thank your majesty," replied the flattered minister.

"Good! You have taken a painful load from off my heart. But here are the papers relative to the much wronged De Vega, for which you applied some days ago. I thought I would sign them this morning, and bring them to you in person. They are all here and duly executed—the pardon, the restoration of the noble gentleman's title, property, and all. I deliver them to you, my lord, with a satisfaction that is only equalled by the pleasure which the healthful sparkle in your eye now affords me."

"Your majesty is very kind," said the minister, who was visibly affected by these obliging words from his royal master. "And, if you will excuse the liberty, I would humbly request, sire, that you deliver these papers to the count himself, who has now the honor of kneeling before your majesty."

"So, so," said the king, smilingly extending his hand to the count, who was deeply moved by this grateful surprise, "our friend the friar—eh? Rise, count, and believe us when we say that you cannot receive these papers with half the joy that we take in giving them. Welcome, Count de Vega—most welcome to our favor and our court!"

The count could only bow his thanks.

O, how these few kind words atoned for half a life of suffering.

"By the way, my lord," continued the king, turning to the minister, "we have a favor at your hands. The young hero, with whose gallant feat our capital is now ringing, must not pass unnoticed or unrewarded. Our royal consort and ourself will be grateful if your lordship will seek him out and present him to us at our levee this evening. Fair day to you, my lords, and to you also, lady!"

And with a light heart and a graceful step, the monarch passed from the cabinet.

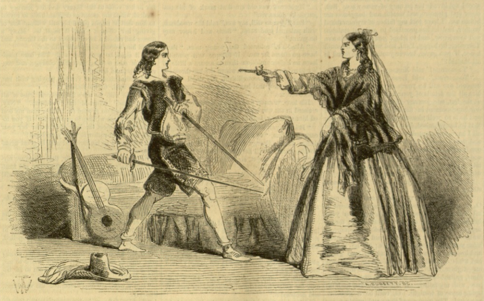
The widow was pale, dumb, bewildered; not at the graciousness of the king, but at the striking resemblance of the friar, or rather the Count de Vega, to the young man she loved.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN WHICH THE MAN IN GRAY REPORTS HIMSELF.

Among the spectators of Leon's triumphant entry into Madrid was no less a personage than the ex-valet, who, as he looked upon the singular cavalcade, observed to himself with an air of vexation:

"If I had not been so stupid as to run from these thieves, I could have easily managed to get a hand in the glory and the profit of their capture. It is true that by running, I saved my thousand pistoles; but then, if I had remained, I could have got them back, together with some choice pickings that would have enabled me to set up for a hidalgo. St. Catharine must have been asleep to let me commit such a blunder. If she isn't more careful in future, I'll take my patronage elsewhere. But what is this—the captain on the back of my old sly friend, Peter. That argues that my other friend, the venerable Don Juan de Mendoza, who is nowhere in sight, has either been left behind, or else has returned to Toledo, in which latter case it is my business to imitate his example. But as a man should never part with what brings him luck I must first re-obtain Peter, who, together with the horses of the robbers, will doubtless be sold to-morrow at public auction by the government, when I can get possession of him for a mere song. But I must follow the varlets and learn what has become of my aspiring friend the minister of justice!"



THE "LAST RESORT" FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE DIFFICULTY BETWEEN THE WIDOW AND HER WAITING-WOMAN.

He hurried along with the crowd to the office of the city magistrate, at the door of which he waited till Leon and the trimmer had delivered the prisoners, when he approached the latter and taking him aside, said—

"Your pardon, senor, but can you inform me why an old man in gray, who was stopped by the brigands two days ago, is not among you?"

"Certainly, friend," returned the trimmer. "It is because he had no desire to come; that is to say, he manifested none: and we had no time to persuade him."

The dry twinkle that accompanied these words, rendered the reply far from satisfactory.

"If you will be so kind as to explain, senor?" said Pequilo, with one of his most amiable smiles.

"The crows are banqueting on him," said the trimmer, "and ere we could get his consent to his removal, we should have to wait till the last day—whereas we could not afford to wait five hours!"

"I am to understand then that he is dead, senor?"

"As a bullet from Zumala's fusil could make him. He attempted to escape, but was not so fortunate as one of his party, who managed to get off without so much as a scratch."

"So that he is literally dead, senor?" said Pequilo, who could scarcely restrain his features from betraying the satisfaction which this intelligence created in him.

"Who!"

"This poor man in gray."

"Literally," said the trimmer. "But why do you inquire?"

"He was one of my companions, senor. In fact it was I who succeeded in making off."

"Indeed!" said the trimmer, scanning him carefully. "Well, you were fortunate."

"As you say, senor—very fortunate. But there were two others—a slender, pale-faced gentleman in dark purple velvet, and a round, fat-faced boy?"

"The gentleman left us only a few minutes ago, and his attendant returned on the day of the capture for his master's ransom."

"Many thanks, senor," said Pequilo, turning away.

How much truth there was in the trimmer's representations, Pequilo, of course did not know; but his ready wit suggested the propriety of seeking out the widow, and learning from her the facts, which must have passed under her observation.

This was not difficult in a city like Madrid, where everybody of any note promenaded at least once a day in the Prado, which was the lounging ground of the noble, the wealthy, the fashionable, and the idle. To the Prado, then, the ex-valet hastened; but after traversing it till nightfall and carefully observing every face, he was compelled to return to his lodgings without having accomplished his wish. On the afternoon of the following day, however, he was more successful, since he not only met the widow, but obtained from her the particulars of de Mendoza's death, and of the subsequent incidents at the cave.

"I now can talk understandingly on the subject," muttered Pequilo to himself, as he turned from the Prado "The Viceroy may set his heart at rest; and as for me, why I must run up my bill of expenses as high as possible, and thank St. Catharine, who has worked for me with honest diligence, and is a reliable patron, after all."

Nothing now hindered his immediate departure but the mule, Peter—which, however, he, three days later, succeeded in purchasing for a trifle, when, selling the Andalusian, disguising himself as a beggar, and settling his bill, he set out with a stout heart for Toledo.

On the evening of the second day thereafter he was announced at the door of the Viceroy's cabinet, which he entered with the air of a man who is conscious that the character of the news he brings will excuse the impudence of his manner.

The Viceroy and the superintendent of the treasury were seated as usual at the round table, on which two silver goblets and a suspicious, large wicker-bottle, with a handle like that of a small demijohn, stood like so many accusing witnesses.

"Well, varlet!" demanded the superintendent, "how goes the battle?"

"It is over, my lord," said Pequilo, glancing with his customary assurance at the bottle; "and I have ridden hard to bring you the intelligence—killing two horses under me on the way, and almost myself as well, that I might have the gratification of saying to you—'Sleep to-night, my lords, in peace—for the enemy will never disturb you more!'"

"Eh?" cried the superintendent, scarcely crediting his senses; "what, knave—what?"

"'Sleep to-night, my lords, in peace,'" repeated the ex-valet, with affected solemnity, "'for the enemy will never disturb you more!'"

"Are you playing with us, rascal, or are you out of your head?" demanded the superintendent, exchanging a glance with the Viceroy, who was careful not to allow his feelings to compromise his dignity.

"If your lordship," returned the ex-valet in a husky voice, "will order me a stoup of wine to clear my throat, which is parched with urging on my beast, I will repay you with tidings that will fall upon your ears like silken music."

"You will find your throat without, varlet!" said the superintendent, not relishing his airs. "Deliver your news, and be careful how you trespass upon our patience! In one word—the party you allude to, is ——"

"Dead, my lords!" said the ex-valet, perceiving the propriety of abandoning his self-importance.

"Enough," said the superintendent. "Wait!"

And summoning an attendant, he ordered a draught of wine.

"Drink that," he added, "and then give me the particulars."

Pequilo thanked him, and after moistening his lips, related the incidents of his journey with such additions and embellishments as his fertile fancy suggested, most of which latter, however, though ingeniously devised, were so improbable and inconsistent to the acute minds of his experienced auditors, that they had but little difficulty in separating the true from the false as he proceeded, and, when he had concluded, in mentally summing up the facts. These, however, were so full of interest that they overlooked the varnish of romance with which they were coated, and remembered only that what they most desired, but had scarcely looked for, had really come to pass.

"Fortune has aided you in your enterprize, rascal," said the superintendent; "but you are notwithstanding entitled to your reward. Call on me to-morrow at ten, and you shall have your money!"

"Your lordship is very good," said Pequilo, with a low bow.

"You may find me so, if you learn how to properly padlock your tongue, so that I can rely upon your statements," said the superintendent, significantly.

"I will do my best, my lord," said Pequilo, bowing himself out.

"Very useful," returned the Viceroy, drawing a long breath for the first time. "Take him into your service, and charge his wages to me. Useful men are scarce! You are thoughtful?"

"I cannot get that young lion out of my mind."

"Leon?"

"He. To capture a whole band. What a man!"

CHAPTER XX.

PAUL.

Paul the country lad was reclining upon a lounge at his master's lodgings. His elbow rested on the lounge, his head was supported by his hands, and his fine, dark eyes were cast down at a small dark spot in the yellow matting that covered the floor. Near him, leaning against the wall, was a guitar; above him a painting of the Madonna; on the left, a toilet table between two chairs; on the right a curtained alcove or small sleeping chamber; near it, on the floor, a couch, such as faithful slaves were wont to repose on when guarding, like jealous sentinels, the slumbers of their masters; in front a table between two windows that looked out upon the street.

Paul was meditating.

He did not seem to like Madrid; rarely going out, and appearing to prefer the solitude of home to the cheerful movements and glitter of the throng abroad. Once—on the third day of his arrival—he strolled along the prado; but catching the eye of the widow in his walk, he flashed a lightning glance of defiance in answer to her recognizing smile, and thenceforth avoided the prado; contenting himself with a short walk now and then up and down the street in which he lived, and always making it a point to meet Leon at the door, to welcome him with one of his winning smiles, and to ask him all the news. Leon never had much to tell; for he knew nothing of his father's business in Madrid, of his visits to the prime minister's, or of his pardon: but to the little he had to say concerning what he saw and heard, Paul listened with eager interest and appeared to treasure it up for subsequent thought. But, for some cause unknown to Leon, the youth was no longer the same merry hearted lad that came to him at the inn of the Three Poor Travellers, that shared his journey over the mountains, and his imprisonment in the robber's cave. His pleasant laugh, that was wont to fall upon the ear like ringing silver, had grown less hearty in its peals; his artless smile was mingled with a shade of melancholy; his step had lost the lightness of its spring; while his whole being was tinged with a mournful sadness. Leon, who loved him as a brother, was deeply concerned at this change; but as the youth had answered "Nothing!" in reply to a tender inquiry on the subject, and appeared anxious to conceal it, the young man imputed it in his thought to some private affair which the youth did not wish to have known, and he considerately forebore to press an explanation: his own experience telling him that there are certain griefs that the heart prefers to bear in silence and alone. He therefore respected the youth's sorrow, but sometimes, deemed it a kindness to ask him to sing a cheerful air, with his guitar, which however, most generally glided off into a melancholy refrain that mirrored only too faithfully the mournfulness of the singer's soul.

Paul was meditating; on what, he had himself given no hints for telling: but his thoughtfulness had grown upon him from the hour when the widow, in the guise of a gentle cavalier, first appeared in the cell occupied by his master and himself in the robber's cave. From that moment, his happy laugh began to lose its cheerful and inspiring gladness; from that moment, thought began to show its shadow on his fair, innocent forehead; from that moment, the sparkle in his eye began to tell of inner sadness: from that moment, one could fancy that hidden tears were on the point of leaping from the dark, silken fringes of his orbs: from that moment, he reminded one of the fair, simple youth that loved to wander in lonely places amid woods and fields, and unburthen his grief, in plaintive sighs, to the leaves and flowers.

Whatever the character of his meditations, he was interrupted in them by a low tapping at the door. Suddenly springing to his feet, his eye flashed with a burst of indignation, as though warned by a presentiment that the knocker was an intruder whose hateful image had been constantly before him in his musings.

"Come in!" he said, in a tone which was half courteous, half defiant.

The door opened and a lady entered, who throwing aside her veil, revealed the features of Donna Isabella de la Montera.

"Ho! it *is* YOU!" cried the youth, in mingled scorn and hatred.

"Even as you see!" said the widow, pleasantly. "Did you expect me?"

"I had a presentiment that you would forget your sex, your rank, and the high dignity that becomes a modest woman, and push yourself unwished for and uninvited, into the very lodgings of my master!"

The widow turned pale, but she restrained the bitter blood that was called up by the humiliating taunt, and replied, in firm, even accents,

"You put it hard! I might reply by stating that it is equally, if not more immodest in you, a woman like myself, to array yourself in habiliments that do not belong to your sex, to follow him to a tavern, to push yourself into his service through the influence of an artful tale, to run after him up and down the country, to be found a dweller in his private apartments, and to give your virtue an appearance at least of exceeding cheapness!"

"Love against wealth!" cried the waiting woman, for it was she.

"And yet I love him as well as you," said the widow. "All's fair in love as in war; and the field is open. I complain not of the course you have taken to make the master of your heart sensible of your devotion, nor should you in fairness upbraid mine. If you can win him—so be it; but as my happiness is also at stake, you cannot reasonably find fault with me for striving to preserve it!"

"I loved him first," cried Ximene, her eyes flashing indignant lightnings, "and he is mine by right! 'Twas I that first discovered his worthiness and brought it to the light. I that first appreciated the great manly spirit that since has placed his foot on the second round of fame's ascending ladder; I that, as his genius lay buried in the obscure gloom of common toil, first exclaimed—'Lo, a man—a hero—a diamond among the rubbish!'"

"We have already talked of this, Ximene; and, if you remember, I convinced you by honest argument, that I have as fair a right to make an effort for his conquest as yourself."

"You may convince my head a thousand times; but you cannot once my heart!"

"Therein lies the difference between us, girl. With me, and all of my order, reason has the highest place. To us love is not, as with you, a mere insenate passion; but a thing exalted by the refining influence of mind into a sentiment at once noble and inspiring. So far are we above the herd, who, like the brutes that they mostly resemble, know no higher principle than desire, no loftier guide than instinct!"

"I am a poor, unlearned girl, it is true, madam; and with no attractions to summon to my aid, except those which nature has given to me; but *these* I mean to use!"

"Use them. It is your right. I complain not."

"But I—I *do* complain, madam! You are poaching on my manor; you are meanly endeavoring to take advantage of what was imparted to you in confidence; you, a woman of proud rank and immense wealth, are basely striving to become the rival of a poor, friendless girl. Is this right, decent, generous—*just?* Ere I would stoop to so unwomanly an act, with a poniard I'd rip out the heart that was vile enough to suggest it, and toss it in the shambles!"

"You are severe! And since mild reasoning will not persuade, I must defend myself from your aspersions with the only weapons you have left me—Truth's! What right have you to love this man?"

"What right!" said the waiting-woman, starting.

"What right?" repeated the widow, calmly. "He is not of your order."

"Not of my order! We are both of the lowly!"

"'Tis false!"

The waiting-woman stared at her in mingled amazement and confusion; as though she had received a sudden blow which had thrown her whole being into a whirl.

"False!" she stammered. "False?"

"False!" repeated the widow. "As well might you say that an honest man and a thief are of the same level, because both were born in the same wretched garret; that a genius and a clod are equal, since both were moulded of the same clay and born in the same low den."

"I am poor!" said the waiting-woman, shaking her head like one bewildered. "In that lies all my crime! But I am fit for any sphere in which moves the man I love!"

"Yes—*if he loves you!* For the love of a great mind ennobles and lifts to its own rank whomsoever it honors with its affection. But can you, with only the single quality of a fair face and a symmetrical form to help you, hope to win a man like Leon, who possesses the double attribute of beauty of person and splendor of mind? You must be mad!"

'*You* may think so! But I, too, feel within me the yearning throes of a spirit that is higher than its rank, and mightier than its fortunes!"

"I doubt it not. While in my service you ever evinced a heart above your fellows; but does that prove your capacity to govern them? The parrot is well as a parrot, but fancy his awkwardness when he attempts to imitate the lark whose rich song makes glad the whole empyrean!"

"You take the privilege of your rank to insult me! There is the door!"

"Can this be you, Ximene?"

"As you see, madam!"

"It cannot be. The Ximene I knew was famed, at least in her mistress's mind, for womanly modesty and gentleness."

"Love calls out our strength!"

"Alas! and our weaknesses, too! Why do you act thus? Have you no fears?"

"Of what?"

"The loss of your self-respect—the reproaches of your own heart!"

"When a spider comes in our way we tread upon it, nor think that in so doing we jeopard our own dignity!"

"Who is the spider, Ximene?"

"You, madam—you! You, who betray confidences—you who seek to overawe a poor, friendless girl with your rank and wealth. You—a thousand times, *you!*"

"But for a foolish fondness that in other hours led me to allow you liberties that we permit only in those we love, and which still speaks loud as ever for my weak-headed but true-hearted serving-woman, I would comply with your wishes and retire!"

"You are seeking to rob me of my only hope of happiness, and you know it!" cried Ximene, bursting into tears.

"If of Leon you speak, alas! poor girl, you *have* no hope! You never can mate with HIM!"

"Who will prevent me?"

"Fortune, who has placed him as far above you as is the star above the glow-worm!"

"There is the door!" cried Ximene, fiercely. "Go!"

"I will not!" returned the widow, who was pale but firm.

"You will not?" said the waiting-woman.

"I will NOT!"

Ximene sprang towards the couch for her rapier, which she unsheathed and with it rushed with maddening rage towards her rival.

The latter, anticipating her intention, had, from the folds of her dress, quietly drawn a small pistol, which she now raised and pointed at her advancing foe, with the warning—

"Another step, girl, and your 'last hope' *will* be 'cut down!'"

The pair eyed each other steadily and in silence for a time, as if striving to make each other blanch. The gaze of the widow was calm yet determined: that of the waiting-woman fierce, passionate, and bordering upon wildness.

The latter at length threw aside the rapier, and averting her head, burst into tears.

The widow felt that she had triumphed; but it was plain from her features that her consciousness of that fact was swallowed up in pity for her old confidants and favorite.

"I will go, Ximene," she said, mildly, "but not until I have made a last effort to show you that, though your rival, I am still your friend."

"Friend!" said the waiting-woman, with sobbing bitterness. "O, yes, you proud betrayers of confidences make very dear friends!"

"Leon can never be yours, Ximene," said the widow, "and may he, then, not be mine?"

"Let who can win, wear him!" cried the waiting-woman, springing to her feet. "I have a face as fair as yours, as brave a heart, too, and I'll not give up my hope!"

"A moment," said the widow, calmly. "Seven days ago I was at the prime minister's, and there, in a friar's disguise, beheld——whom think you?"

"I know not, nor care!"

"Patience, and hear me through. You remember a note, announcing his sudden flight, from my head woodman, Leon's father?"

Ximene looked at her with a steady gaze, and in sullen silence.

"The person in the friar's disguise was my old servitor, the woodman. I knew him not at first, but on returning home, the recognition flashed upon me with convincing force, and I *felt* that it was he."

"What is there strange in that," said the waiting-woman, "that you should dwell upon it with such emphasis?"

"You shall hear. While I was interceding in Leon's behalf with the minister, who was under some personal obligations to my late husband for moneys loaned, who should enter but the king with certain papers in his hand."

"I see nothing surprising in that!" observed the waiting-woman, derisively. "It is not unusual, I believe, for kings to enter their ministers' cabinets, or to have papers in their hands!"

"Wait," said the widow. "Do you remember ever to have heard of one Don Garcia de Vega?"

"The town crier has made the name familiar," said the woman, drily.

"He was supposed, if you have not forgotten it, to be living concealed, and in disguise, in or near Toledo."

"The town-crier so read the proclamation!" returned the waiting-woman, with a mocking bow. "But I do not call to mind hearing that the publishing of the fact ever resulted in unveiling the nobleman's retreat; unless, indeed, your ladyship, whose genius for breaking in upon privacy cannot be questioned, learned the secret from the poor gentleman himself, and, with your usual zeal, quietly communicated it to the government! The thing is not unlikely! I, myself, will certify to your willingness and dexterity in that way! But what had the king in his hand; another batch of proclamations?"

"A refusal to inform you would be a just return for your insolence!" said the widow. "But I pardon it, and reply: the papers in his majesty's hand were the pardon of Don Garcia de Vega, and the restoration of his title and estates, together with an order on the royal treasury for the moneys seized at the time of the confiscation of his property."

"As I am not Don Garcia," said the waiting woman, "I do not understand how this can possibly concern me!"

"You will directly. His majesty was about to hand these papers to the prime minister, when the latter requested him to hand them to Don Garcia himself, and turning to the friar, who bowed, he introduced him to the king!"

"So that ——" said the waiting woman, turning pale as death.

"So that my head woodman, Leon's father, whom I saw in the minister's cabinet, in the king's cabinet, turns out to be a high and important member of the upper order of our nobility—Don Garcia de Vega!"

Ximene's sight became dim; her knees refused to support her, and she sank, with a low, gurgling cry, to the floor.

The widow rushed to her rescue, and bathing her temples, soon restored her to consciousness.

"My brain reels!" she murmured, raising her hand to her forehead. "I fear I am about to die!"

"Courage!" whispered the widow, deeply agitated. "I meant not to pain you; indeed I did not."

Ximene answered not. She was very pale. Her eyes were lustrous, but not with hope; while over her fair brow gathered again the old melancholy cloud.

The widow became anxious for her former favorite; and now that she beheld her in pain, affection returned in all its olden tenderness and depth.

The lustre in the waiting woman's eyes at length drew in towards the centre of the pupils, and settled into a strong energetic light.

"Prove to me," she exclaimed, springing spasmodically to her feet, "that this is no romance—no lie, coined to cheat me of my hopes. Prove it, or you will have the blood of a poor friendless girl to answer for in the last great day!"

"I give you the word of a lady ——"

"*Proof!*" interrupted Ximene, hoarsely.

The widow reflected.

"Don Garcia is to be publicly recognized by his majesty to-night," she said at length; "but, though I am myself invited, I know not whether I could secure admission to another."

"PROOF!" repeated Ximene, in a hollow voice. "If this be indeed so, then ——"

The widow looked at her.

The waiting woman was paler than any shroud. A mournful shade was upon her brow; her eyes were bright and sunken, and the lids glittering as if with intense suffering.

An instant appeared to have sufficed to change her into a picture of beauty struggling without hope in the midst of ruin.

The widow shuddered in mingled pity and terror.

"You shall see the ceremony!" she exclaimed. "I promise it!"

"Enough!" said the waiting woman. "Your address?"

The widow gave it.

"I will be at your door at eight, to accompany you," continued Ximene. "Leave me, now. My brain is on fire, and if I have not rest, it will burst."

"Adieu!" said the widow. And she turned from her old favorite with an air of mingled tenderness and compassion.

"Rest!" muttered the waiting woman, tottering towards and sinking upon the lounge. "Yes, I want rest—and it will come—the long, long sleep that knows no waking! There are no ceremonial forms there—no false pomps and ranks to tell the lowly poor to stand outside the door while wealth and retinue lord it. No ruthless breaking of honest hearts that love above their station; no withering of hopes—no rising joyous as the lark and lying down amid ruin and despair—naught but sleep, sleep, sleep! Break, break!" she added, laying her hand upon her breast, which shook with sharp, agonizing pain. "What have hearts to do in this world, where 'dignity' must be sustained? No; let's sing our requiem, and go down to our repose, like two poor souls whose want of thought and culture has undone us and sent us into the shade before our time!"

A step echoed along the corridor, the door opened and Leon entered. His features were radiant with stirring tidings.

"Give me joy, Paul—give me joy!" he exclaimed. "I've seen my father, and am come to tell you glad news. Ha!" he cried, checking himself; "in tears. What has happened, my poor boy? Tell your Leon the matter!"

"'Tis nothing!" said the waiting woman, hastily drying her eyes.

"Nay," said the young man, taking a seat beside her, and drawing her towards him, "lay your head upon your Leon's shoulder, and unfold to him your grief."

"'Tis nothing!" repeated Ximene, sobbing.

"Tears like these, my Paul, spring not forth without a cause. I came to tell you great news of what his majesty has done for my father, and to invite you to go with me to-night to the palace, and do I find you in tears?"

"My heart is sad!" said Ximene.

"I see, my poor, dear Paul. But with what?"

"Don't ask me!" said the waiting woman, hiding her face on his shoulder.

An air of pain darkened the young man's forehead.

"I will not, my brother," he said, tenderly. "I would not invade the privacy of your woes. But, cheer up! pleasure, and wealth, and happiness are before us. I have told my father of my new found brother, and he has promised to call and embrace you to-morrow, and to adopt you also for his son. Therefore, be happy, Paul, and we'll see, a month hence, if two gayer, braver youths can be found in all Madrid!"

"To-morrow!" said Ximene, abruptly.

"To-morrow," said Leon. "To-morrow, my honored sire will be yours as well. I have given him all the details of your history, of our meeting at the inn, our journey through the mountains, our imprisonment in the brigands' cave, and all; and he is so well pleased with my report of you that he has promised, in case he should find you all I have represented—which of course he will, and more—to give you his name, to take you into our family, to educate you like a nobleman's son, and to endow you with a princely income. So, take heart, Paul—take heart; throw sorrow to the winds, and be happy as the day!"

"I will, Leon: for your sake!" said Ximene, stifling a rising sob.

"For mine, Paul, my father's, and your own. O, we shall be the merriest, lovingest brothers in all Spain! Embrace me, Paul, and don your brightest smile, call up your gayest laugh; for to-morrow we shall have found a father; to-morrow we shall be as one; your hopes and sorrows mine, mine yours, and both our father's; for he is kind and loving, too; and having had his own griefs and trials can feel for those of others. Embrace me—tighter, boy. That's it—that's like my handsome, gallant brother. But I must away, to prepare, with my father—*our* father—for the, to him, trying scene of to-night. O, 'twill be a glorious occasion! The memory of three-and-twenty years of banishment and suffering to be expunged forever by one kind word from the king; but I will tell you the story as we return from the palace. I may be late, for we have much to do; but hold yourself in readiness to accompany me. Put on no extra raiment; for yours is a form that shows most favorably in the simplest: and I am sure that the king himself will not shine to such advantage. So, one embrace—what you want my lip? There, then, my brave and handsome brother! O, I'll be proud of you, when we shall stand together before their majesties to receive a permanent welcome to their court; for the queen, I know, will fancy your bright, ingenuous face, and tell her ladies that a fairer never shone above the shoulders of e'er a youth in Spain. What—you want my lip again? There's many a peerless maid in Toledo and Madrid would envy me your kiss. So, once more, my Paul, adieu!"

He said, and was gone.

Ximene approached the window, and watched his retreating form till it disappeared around the angle of a contiguous street. Then returning to the lounge, she bowed her head upon her hands in thought.

"Can it be," she murmured, fragmentarily, as though her mind was performing its last spasms, "that his joy arises from his having heard that *she* will be there. Or is it possible that the Isabel he mutters so often in his dreams is the name of another? No—my heart tells me that 'tis *hers*?"

"She is beautiful, too, and loves him, and will be true to him as I would, and will make his happiness her aim.

"Had she remained in Toledo, I could in time, by being near him, have driven her image from his breast and placed mine there. But that hope is gone, and every other, and so, poor heart, let's break and sink together down in the voiceless depths of eternal night.

"Yes—she is right; true love seeks only the happiness of its love. I'll make the sacrifice, and retire.

"And yet his kiss was sweet. I feared my heart would heal again under its reviving breath, and I so wish to die.

"He'd be 'proud of me;' if it were me as a maid, and not as a brother, which would be proudest, then!

"To the palace? Not to-night, nor to-morrow, nor never. What should the lowly do there—the lowly without culture! And yet she meant kindly, and he, too. And therefore I give them gentle thoughts, and wish them sunshine when they wed.

"They will sometimes think of me—he of his boy-brother, she of the poor friendless girl, whose love was higher than her fortunes.

"And now," she added, rising, "farewell, my lute, whose strings so oft have echoed the love sadness of my soul; farewell, my couch, which hast heard with me in the silent watches of the night *her* name fondly murmured in his dreams; farewell, my rapier, which hast known no evil at my hands; farewell, chamber, which hast received his breath in slumber and softly borne his sighs to the outer airs; farewell each and every object on which I've looked these few days and fancied as dear friends: and may eternal joy be his who owns you, and peace reign alway at his hearth. Farewell!"

A last, lingering look around the apartment, and she turned from it with a plaintive moan. Passing into the street, she turned to the left and walked with a hurried step till she came to where a clump of trees overhung the turbid waters of the Manzanares.

"Thou who knowest my suffering!" she murmured, earnestly, looking up; "who seest that what I am about to do is from no thought of evil; who hast been pleased to give me many happy days; who seest how I am stricken down with grief and sadness—pardon, O, pardon!"

Glancing around to see if she was observed, and perceiving no eye upon her, she threw her cap upon the earth, and dropped lightly into the stream. The disturbed waters foamed a moment as they opened to receive her, and then reclosing, flowed on calmly as before.

CHAPTER XXI.

JOY AND SORROW.

On the morning of the day on which occurred the incidents recorded in the preceding chapter, Leon, while walking on the Prado, observed his father advancing with a business step. The young man perceiving that he was still in his monk's guise, was uncertain whether he desired to be recognized or not, and concluded to be governed by the woodman himself. His doubts were removed by the approach of the latter, who, motioning him aside, exclaimed—

"Well met, my son. I was looking for you. Meet me at my lodgings at the close of the siesta. I have something to communicate."

"I will not fail, sir," said Leon, with an air of deep respect.

"You still wear your old cloud of melancholy!" observed the woodman, with mingled gentleness and reproach.

"My heart is still sad, sir," said Leon, modestly, "and I have not the talent to look what I am not!"

"And yet you have been honored by the notice of your king!"

"My sorrow was old ere that mark of his majesty's kindness, sir."

"But if you so will, my son," said the woodman, with paternal tenderness, "fame and honor may be yours."

"Alas! sir," returned the young man, "these have no charm for me. If fortune will permit I have no higher ambition than to secure a little of her favor for a poor youth whom she has thrown in my way. That accomplished, the small retreat that serves those that have done with earth will suffice for me."

His tone, manner, and evident sincerity touched a chord in the woodman's breast that, while it filled him with pity, bathed his lids with moisture.

"It is the part of brave men," he said, hoping to encourage him, "to wring from fortune what she denies them. Energy can accomplish much; if nothing more, it will help us to forget!"

"I never can forget, sir. My grief grows upon me, day by day."

"Action, my son, would check, or at least mitigate it. Any physician will tell you to that effect. The king's army wants filling, and there is a variety in a soldier's life that would soon shake your settled sadness."

Leon calmly shook his head.

"I think not, sir," he observed diffidently, looking down, and playing with the tassel of his cloak-string. "But if it be your wish to see me in the king's service, I am ready to enter it."

"I have understood that his majesty has been pleased to tender you a post in the palace?" said the woodman.

"True, sir. But as it is an office which calls only for ability in intrigue, I thanked his majesty, and declined it."

"His majesty doubtless thought it would be gratifying to you to be near the royal person. But he would doubtless be glad to give you a lieutenancy in the guards?"

"I will ask his majesty for that office, if it be your wish, sir?"

"I had rather you would consult your own, my son. Have you no personal desire—no aim?"

"Yes, sir. I had thought, after obtaining a rising place for the young friend I have alluded to, of proceeding, with your consent, to the French court, which is at war with England, and offering my sword to the king."

"Could you not find work for it under your own monarch?"

"His majesty, if you will please to remember sir, is at peace with the whole world."

"That is no reason, my son. Are not the highways infested with thieves, the mountains with brigands?"

"I prefer a more honorable service, sir," answered the young man. "Nevertheless, if it be your wish, I will relinquish the thought."

"What motive had you in conceiving it?"

"Repose is easily found in battle, sir!"

The quiet, fixed despair of this reply penetrated the woodman's soul. He dropped his eyes with mingled pity and uneasiness. Looking up after a few moments, he said—

"I shall expect you at the close of the siesta!" and, mingling with the throng, passed on.

Leon was punctual to the moment.

The apartment occupied by his sire was small, and plain to nakedness. It simply contained a bed and two chairs.

"Sit down," said the woodman, as we shall continue to call him. He paced the room awhile, and then demanded, "Why did you leave your mistress? I have a reason for the question," he added, seeing that the young man hesitated.

"Her frequent visits to the library unnerved me," answered Leon, with a deep blush.

"Give me the particulars of your last interview, my son," said the woodman, kindly.

Leon complied, and his father meditated.

"And so you took her silence for pride?" he inquired presently

"Yes, sir."

The woodman reflected again.

"The lady," he then said, "might have been equally grieved and surprised at the suddenness of your resignation, and hence her silence."

"I think not, sir," said Leon. "Why should she be grieved, when she could have felt no interest in me, and when the vacancy caused by my withdrawal, could be so easily supplied?"

"What brought the lady to Madrid?" asked the woodman.

"Private business, I doubt not, sir. She has friends here."

"Strong ones," said the woodman, "as even I can bear witness. What would you say if you should hear that the lady, on learning that you had gone to Madrid, probably to push your fortunes, followed you without delay, to use her interest in your favor with the prime minister?"

Leon looked up at his father with an expression of surprise, and a moment later turned pale.

"You are trifling with me, sir!" he said, hoarsely. "Why should the lady take such a step for one whose social position places him so far beneath her?"

"The lady herself can best reply to that," said the woodman. "But that she has done this, I have such testimony as leaves it beyond doubt—my own eyes and ears."

Leon was pale, speechless, bewildered. Wild thoughts were galloping through his brain and wrenching despair from his heart, and pushing hope in its place. Could it be that he was mistaken in the lady, after all—that her visits to the library were prompted by a tender feeling for him who labored there—that she had condescended to forget her own rank; his lowliness, and what a censorious world would say—that she had gone there to tell him by her presence, that if he had the wit to comprehend the meaning of her prolonged stays, and the courage to address her, her ear and heart would give him audience, and her eye smile upon his suit, poor and lonely as he was? *Could* it!

But, no, no—it could not be; for what was *he* that so fair, and rich, and noble a lady should stoop from her high sphere to notice him!

And yet it could not be *all* a dreamy fable; for his father—his wise, careful father, who always weighed every word, and who never dealt in jests—had seen and heard her asking the influence of the all-powerful Ramirez, in his favor. What could *that* mean? What but that she felt an interest in him—yes, a *great* interest; for ladies take no such step for those that are indifferent to them. Nor do they undertake perilous journeys to serve persons in whose fate they feel no concern.

It might be—yes, it *might* be—that the lady was, after all, one of the few rare beings that recognize no distinctions in men save those that the God of nature has made; and having observed his patience, his industry, his equalness to every emergency in which he had been placed, had generously said, out of the rich magnanimity of her great heart, 'There is one who only needs encouragement and opportunity to achieve a proud name among men, and I will show him that there is one at least in Spain who appreciates struggling merit. I will estimate him according to his worth, not his rank, and place him on a level with myself.' It might be that sentiments like this had actuated her in her visits to the library and her journey to Madrid, which she meant as delicate hints to reveal to him that he might plead his suit without fear of giving her offence. Yes, it *might* be. Many a queen had raised a loved subject to the throne, and found him worthy to share it with her.

If it *should* be true, after all! The bare possibility of such a thing gave him courage, and courage hope, and hope joy.

"I cannot think that you are playing with me, sir!" he said, to his father.

"I trifle with no one's feelings, and least of all with yours!" returned the woodman. "Nay, though having no ground for it other than my best judgment, I am willing to go thus far: If you to-night should meet the lady and proffer her your arm, she would rather it were your hand!"

Leon leaped to his feet, and said, in great agitation,—

"Forget not, I pray you, sir, that if you are saying this only to raise my soul from her old familiar gloom, that, on discovering the cheat, she will sink down again never more to rise!"

"Nay, my son, I am in earnest."

Leon burst into a loud laugh, and turning pale, staggered.

The woodman caught him as he was on the point of falling, and smilingly observed—

"Courage, boy—courage. You have nought to fear. To-night your doubts will be all dispelled. Courage!"

"O, sir, I scarce can hope it!" cried the young man, sinking upon his chair. "Joy is new to me, and doubt and grief old friends. I am so far beneath her!"

"Not a whit, my son!" returned the woodman, tenderly.

"Sir?" said Leon, looking up through his paleness.

"All need of concealment is now over," said the woodman. "In rank, you are the lady's superior, in worth her equal, in wealth at least her peer!"

The young man observed him with an air of amazement, which changed little by little, into an expression of deep pity.

"My poor, poor father!" he exclaimed, forgetting his grief, and rising and approaching the woodman with filial tenderness. "Has fortune crowned her cruelty by striking you with madness!"

"Fear not, my son!" said the woodman, smiling at the idea. "We are of a race whom the jilt has never had power upon in that way. But, is it possible that you have never suspected your father to be better born than his calling denoted?"

"I have even thought him worthy of a crown," said the young man; "but I never permitted myself to question that he was other than what he himself professed to be."

"Frankly and gracefully answered," said the woodman. "But, yourself. Have you never guessed the source of the proud instincts, the lofty aspirations that, true to the high blood they indicated, led you to look above the sphere into which malicious fortune had thrown you?"

"I guessed no more, sir, than that I felt myself the peer of the proudest he that e'er drank at the fount of knowledge, sang to fair lady in her bower, or wore a falchion on his thigh."

"Not quite so high as a king and yet higher than a common lord," said his father, with a pleasant smile. "Listen, and learn from whom you are sprung.

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As the reader is already familiar with the woodman's history, we shall not repeat it.

"And now, my son," he continued, when he had brought the narrative to a close, "judge whether your late mistress is beyond your suit!"

Leon was dumb with mingled astonishment and satisfaction. He could scarcely believe himself awake.

"It is like a dream, a fairy tale!" he said at length. "How Paul will rejoice!"

"A new name!" observed his father, with a genial air. "To whom does it belong?"

"A friend, sir, whom fortune has given to me for a brother: a poor country lad who has helped to while away my lone, dark hours, and to throw streaks of sunshine across my desolate path."

"Indeed? A prize! I shall have two sons instead of one! Where found you him?"

Leon related the scene at the inn of the Three Poor Travelers, and the incidents that had befallen him since, dwelling with cordial emphasis upon the youth's enthusiasm, his affection, his sprightly wit, his silver laugh, his gentleness, and his devotion.

The nobleman was deeply interested.

"I will see him to-morrow," he said. "If he be all you describe, I shall return to my ancient palace with a son upon each arm, and the ringing mirth of the younger will cause the grave old portraits of our ancestors to stare down at us in wonder! But this interview has lasted longer than I designed. You doubtless are impatient to gladden your favorite with the glad tidings you have heard. Take an hour for that purpose, and then return. The king receives me publicly to-night, and I must consult my tailor. If I can enter the presence with two sons, his majesty's pleasure and my pride will be the greater. Therefore invite your brother."

"I thank you, sir!" said Leon, his eyes sparkling with mingled gratitude and joy.

"Away," said his father, pleasantly. "I will wait for you."

* * * * * * *

On returning to his lodgings at dusk, Leon was surprised to find that his *protege* was not visible. He waited awhile, but finding that the youth did not return, he reluctantly departed to his father's alone.

"He may follow us to the palace," said the latter. "I'll leave word with the usher to admit him. Nay, be not cast down. He will come after us."

The great hall of the palace was thronged with the flower of the nobility. Long before nine o'clock the guests had all arrived, and beauty, wit, music and dancing had begun to exert their fascinations. The prime minister had departed from his usual late rule to avoid night assemblies and night airs, and was present, smiling and urbane as ever. Seated in an easy chair on the left of the chairs of State, he received the gratulations of the company, most of whom were sincerely desirous that he might be spared for years, to prevent changes in the government, and also in the offices held by themselves. Ramirez, who had not gone through power in vain, understood the value of their good wishes, while he also knew that of their number there were not a few who were attached to him from nobler motives. He beckoned de Vega and Leon to him and retained them at his side, and by his consideration and affable courtesy to the pair, notified the spectators that they were in favor. Leon turned his eye frequently toward the door, but Paul did not make his appearance, and the young man sighed.

De Vega bore himself with dignity. Knowing himself strong in the confidence of the minister, and through him in that of the king, he carefully avoided the appearance of anxiety for recognition; returning the salutations of all introduced to him by Ramirez with a calm, stately nod, which had in it all the independence and at the same time all the grace of a high-born gentleman.

Leon was equally an object of interest to the ambitious, the scheming, and the strong of both sexes; the cavaliers envying him the very qualities which rendered him attractive to the fair. The former beheld in him a dangerous rival, the latter an object of conquest.

Without appearing to do so, the young noble ran his eye now and then through the assembly to discover, if possible, the owner of that form which had been so long before him in his waking and sleeping dreams. From these fruitless searches, he turned invariably to the door; but, like the widow, Paul was invisible.

Precisely at nine o'clock, the dancing was interrupted by the master of ceremonies; the folding doors at the upper end of the hall were thrown open; the music struck up an enlivening march, and the king and queen appeared, each attended by a small suite. In that of the latter, Leon at length perceived the object of his love. She was simply but richly dressed, and her calm, graceful, confident demeanor and superb beauty did not fail to attract attention.

Leon's heart bounded. Never before had he seen her so dazzlingly captivating.

De Vega attentively observed her also; and after a few moments he ceased to marvel that his son had found her service dangerous to his peace.

"Who is she? How comes she, a stranger, in her majesty's train?" was the universal mental inquiry.

For this favor the widow was indebted to the minister, who had solicited it of the queen, who, after a private audience with the lady herself, had granted it with pleasure.

The widow had had the good judgment to perceive that in their relative positions the ex-secretary and herself had changed places; that he being now in all respects the higher, the condescension was altogether on his part; and that an introduction from the queen could alone place them on a footing of equality—after which introduction she trusted in her own conscious powers to win him. She hoped much also from the friendly assistance of her royal mistress, to whom she had confided her secret.

From this it will be seen that the fair lady had not the faintest suspicion that the young man's heart was hers already.

The king and queen passed down the hall to the chairs of state, which they had scarcely taken when the prime minister approached, and presenting De Vega and his son, observed—

"Permit me, sire, to commend these, your worthy servants, to the favorable attention of your majesty, and also to that of your illustrious consort. Two braver, truer subjects cannot be found within your realm."

"We receive you, sirs," said the king, "and bid you welcome to our capital and court." Then hurriedly stepping down from the throne, and cordially giving a hand to each, he smilingly added, "We embrace you, gentlemen; and it shall not be our fault if you be not henceforth dear to our royal heart!"

"We humbly thank your majesty!" said De Vega, who was sensibly affected.

"My lords," continued the king, to the assembly, "we commend these gentlemen to your confidence and esteem, as our special friends. Who treats them with honor and consideration, confers the same upon us!"

And pressing the hands of the pair, he re-ascended the dais and exclaimed, "On with the dance, in which our royal consort and ourself will take a part. Don Garcia," he added, presenting him to the queen, "her majesty will honor you with her hand in a waltz. Don Leon will be your vis-a-vis, if we can find him a partner."

A score or more of maiden hearts palpitated at this remark, and their owners dropped their eyes with blushing modesty, which, being interpreted, in this instance meant exceeding willingness.

The king smilingly turned to the queen, adding, "If we leave the selection to your majesty, we shall then have the privilege of choosing a fair companion for ourself."

The queen, who had no secrets from her lord, understood the hint. Turning to the widow, she bade her advance, and presenting her to the ex-secretray, said—

"Our dear friend, Donna Isabel de la Montera, who shares our confidence and love!"

Leon bowed, and gave the lady his arm; but we cannot describe the blushing thrill that darted through both their frames as each felt the proud electric touch of the other, for the first time.

The figure was soon formed, the music struck up, and the next moment the assembly was undulating in the graceful waltz.

We know not what message was conveyed between the handsome ex-secretary and the beautiful widow through the telegraphic medium of their eyes, through the feeling of their hands, or the mingling of their breaths during the dance; but it is most certain that when the waltz was over, the pair were on the footing of very good friends, and seemed, the remainder of the evening, to have neither eyes nor ears for any but themselves. They appeared to understand each other's heart-feelings from instinct, and to revel in the consciousness of each other's love. But what they had mutually said to bring about this delicious understanding, we cannot, as an honest scribe, take upon ourself to state. We were not at their elbow during the waltz, which, as everybody knows, is a dance that inspires courage, confidence and frankness, and suggests a thousand of those little half-whispered speeches, each of which is a whole volume of declarations or explanations in itself. We are, of course, aware that the reader will be exceedingly anxious upon this point, and that he will be likely to brand us with all sorts of hard names for not communicating it; but then if we don't know it ourself, how in reason can we be expected to tell it to him. It is true we could invent a plausible solution of the mystery; but then that would not be right, seeing that it is a true history we are recording, and not a fiction. Besides, the sagacious reader would detect the forgery, and lose all confidence in our veracity ever after. We therefore shall leave the mystery to unfold itself, and content ourself with stating that the parties were intoxicated with the rapture of each other's society, that they retired with the rest of the assembly at eleven o'clock, that they walked, slowly and arm in arm, to the lady's hotel, at the door of which the latter gave her hand to the gentleman, who imprinted on it one of those singular kisses that afford as much pleasure to the giver as to the receiver, and then betook himself to his own lodgings with a fulness of proud joy that in these graver days would tempt a watchman to suspect that the young man had been indulging in something stronger than rejoicing hopes.

"How Paul will rejoice in my happiness!" he exclaimed to himself, as he bounded up the staircase to his apartment.

And here we must pause to weep; for tears are climbing up to our lids and falling down upon our cheeks at mention of the poor country lad, whose handsome face was no longer there, whose artless smile no longer lighted up the place, and whose silver laugh was to ring no more upon his loving master's ear. A knell of sadness seemed to strike upon the young nobleman's heart as he entered and found the room in darkness.

"What, Paul, my boy! no light?" he said, half in kindness, half in reproach. "You are not wont to retire, and leave me thus!"

And yet the while he spoke, he looked for no response; for a sense of desolation, a presage of a great mournful calamity, came upon him like a solemn intuition, and half stilled his pulses as he strove to penetrate to remembered objects in the solemn gloom.

"Paul!" he exclaimed, in plaintive alarm. 'Paul! my brother, are you here? It is I, Leon."

There was no answer; nor did he expect any: and yet he called again. A sad presentiment told him it was in vain—why, he could not guess, but he continued to cry out the name in a tone of mingled loneliness and dread, while groping his way to the table, and striking a light, and holding it up and looking timidly, yet searchingly around.

"Paul!" he exclaimed, "Paul! My poor boy—my brother. Where are you?"

But there was no Paul on the lounge, no Paul on the couch, no Paul on the chairs, no Paul in the alcove, no Paul anywhere.

Why and whither he had gone, the young man knew not, nor could guess; but a something, he could not define what, told him that the country youth was gone forever.

And he felt very sad then; and setting the lamp upon the table, he sank upon a chair, and bowing his head upon his hands spoke out his grief in a great wild heart-breaking sob.

"Paul!" he murmured, "Paul! my boy—my brother, where are you?"

What to him were rank, honor, riches, without Paul to share them? What to him the gladness of knowing himself beloved, and have no Paul to whom to tell it? What to him the rich sweetness of his mistress's smile, if Paul's went not with it?

"Come back, Paul—come back. Joy will not be joy and you away. Where'er you are, return!"

The very chairs and table, the couch upon the floor, the madonna on the wall, the curtain of the alcove, the dimly-burning lamp, seemed to share in Leon's loneliness, and to join in his mournful cries.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE BROKEN SPELL.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

Ernest—oh, Ernest! 'tis a lonely night,
A night of starry sadness and dim dreams;
And I am paler by this misty light
Than the cold corpse of thy devotion seems!

But thou—I know the olden glory yet
Burns mid the shadows of thy haunting eyes;
I know—but think not, boy, I regret
The long-hushed music of thy love's soft sighs.

They tell me thou art brighter than of yore,
And that one word would win thee back again;
Yet go—I *loved* thee—but I love no more!
Thy picture's faded from my heart and brain.

I'd call thee "friend"—but that's a sacred name—
And thou didst leave me frail and all alone,
When fate frowned—when harsh words like whirlwinds came,
And shook the purple of my spirit's throne.

But now—ah, Ernest, Ernest—now, yes now
I see thee come silent and tremblingly,
With down-cast eyes, I see thee come and bow
To the world's idol! how I blush for thee!

Yet think not that I turn from thee for scorn—
Again I tell thee that I love thee not;
Thou knowest I did in youth's romantic morn,
And that young vision is—not quite forgot.

And yet 'tis faded. All the fragrant flowers
That blossom sweet round that enchanted scene,
The summer stars, the birds, the myrtle bowers,
The dreamy music and the lake's blue sheen—

Ay, all the scenery of my soul is changed—
Thou art the hero of my heart no more!
My love from thee has long, long been estranged;
Then leave me now—even as you did of yore.

LIFE'S CONTRASTS;

OR,

THE DWELLERS AT MORELAND FARM.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Claudia Moreland, even in childhood, was endowed with a rare and exquisite beauty that charmed the eyes and attracted the regard of all who looked upon it. To this radiant loveliness of face, this glowing fairness of complexion, those liquid eyes of blue, those sunny, gleaming curls were added an indescribable gracefulness of undulating motion, and a wondrous power and mobility of expression.

In those early days her whole being was encircled by its appropriate atmosphere—that of an entire and unceasingly watchful love. Her father was a wealthy farmer—a man of education and refinement, who prized intercourse with Nature far above the conventionalisms and falsenesses of life among the great aggregates of humanity—a gentleman in the true and literal sense of the term. Her mother was a woman eminently fitted for her sphere—an intelligent, practical house-wife, with brain, and eye, and hand equally alert throughout the entire realm over which she held sovereignty; yet able, by means of an admirable system, which governed all her household operations, to appear in the presence of her frequent guests, and always at her stated periods of rest and recreation, with that graceful repose which characterizes the true lady. The daughter of a New England clergyman, as distinguished for his learning as for his piety, she had been well and thoroughly educated; and, in connection with her husband, had instructed her children at home, in all the rudiments of knowledge. Her sons had been prepared to enter upon a collegiate course before leaving the parental roof, and her daughters needed nothing to perfect them in education (according to common and conventional ideas), except the year's tuition in modern accomplishments, which they were sent to a neighboring city to obtain.

Claudia was many years younger than the other children of the family; and the household would have been left desolate without the joyous light of those voices which the harsh tones of sorrow had never rendered discordant, had she not remained, when they all were gone, to delight the eyes of her parents with her radiant beauty and her winning grace, and to cheer their hearts with her loving ways.

She had ever been the pet of the household, concentrating around her its whole mighty aggregate of affection; but the time came when the names of her young sisters were spoken in grief-broken tones, or with the tender reverence that follows into the tomb the memory of the beautiful, early dead; and Claudia was left the one daughter of her bereaved parents.

A fearful and fatal epidemic had entered the boarding-school where Claudia's elder sisters were residing. Both were seized by its terrible symptoms, and before their agonized parents could answer the hurried summons to their bedside, one was dead, the other fast sinking toward the same fatal consummation.

Scarcely were these young forms laid beneath the green sod of the little family burial-ground, than the elder son came home to die. An ardent and enthusiastic scholar, he had laid the foundations of premature decay, at college, by his unceasing devotion to books. While studying his profession his efforts had never been suffered to relax, though he was constantly warned by his failing health. At length, just at the completion of his studies, when the honorable career of a long life seemed bright before him, he sickened and, with strength turned to utter weakness before the inroads of his long-hidden disease—consumption, he saw all his hopes vanishing as Death beckoned him toward the grim gates of the grave. Months of lingering suffering followed, and then the hour of release came, and another green mound was heaped above the stilled heart in the hill-side enclosure where the young sisters already lay.

Claudia's only surviving brother returned to the home of his childhood at this period. Graver and less enthusiastic than the brother he had lost, he had yet marked out for himself a career which he would have followed with the persistent perseverance that belongs to deep, silent natures like his, but he quietly sacrificed his inclinations, and the wishes that had grown to be a part of himself, upon the shrine of duty. Sorrow and bereavement had done the work of years, and his parents while yet not far down the declivity that ends at the grave-side, had become suddenly aged, and were bent beneath a premature feebleness. They needed the comforting presence of their son, they needed his affectionate cares, they needed the sustaining power of his strong, young manhood.

Elnathan Moreland gave up his scientific investigations, and went home to cultivate his father's acres, and to live where it was right that he should live. And being well assured that his course was right, he soon ceased to lament his sacrifices. He found pleasure in the life to which they led him. Even his powerful mind found employment, if not sufficient for its entire capacity, enough to keep the rust of idleness from gathering upon it. And, what was better far, his heart was fed and nourished by the affectionate natures amidst which he dwelt, and it awoke from the torpor which had grown upon it amidst the inanition of his student-life.

He conversed and read with his father and mother, he superintended the culture and improvement of the large farm, he took upon himself the education of his little sister, whom it was resolved never to send to school, and he found himself abundantly occupied, especially when he had added to his pleasant employments the long rambles over hill, and field, and by brook-side with the scientific friends who frequently visited him.

Thus passed several quietly happy years in the old homestead. The parents, with hearts divided between the living and those who had passed away, awaited death with calmness as that which should be at once the signal of short separation and eternal reunion. The years glided on so quietly that no change marked their flight, save that wrought in the young Claudia, whose lovely childhood expanded gradually into a beautiful womanhood, and the statelier gravity of Elnathan's earnest mien, and the occasional silvery monitor among his dark locks to tell that he had reached the height of his years, and had already commenced the descent.

When Claudia was seventeen her mother died, and the daisies had blossomed but once upon her grave when her husband followed her; and thus the lives that had blended together through years of joy and sorrow were not long divided. It was as if the patient, loving wife ventured first into the dark valley, which all must tread alone, and stood upon the thither brink of its mighty river waiting for him from whom not even death could sunder her loving heart.

Elnathan Moreland and Claudia were left alone in the homestead. Their lives passed on with the usual monotony during the winter months that followed the death of their father, but with summer came several of Elnathan's ancient college friends. With the desire to cheer his sister's loneliness, he had invited one of those friends to bring with him his sister, and at the same time wrote to a distant relative, a widow, asking her to come and assist Claudia in doing the honors of the house to her guests. Mrs. Walter very gladly accepted the invitation, for a narrow income had long compelled her to uncongenial associations and a poor home, which she was quite willing to exchange for good society and the luxuries of wealth.

Elnathan thought he was doing his sister a service in making these arrangements, while for himself he would, from habit, have infinitely preferred the uninterrupted society of his male friends. It is to be feared that Claudia did not duly appreciate the sacrifice which her brother had made. She stood greatly in awe of Mr. Kenyon, who was violent in temper, and arrogant in manner, and whose "specimens" in the form of hideous reptiles and impaled bugs were the terror of her life during all his visits. Some portion of this awe she felt, in anticipation, of his sister, for, at the very least, she thought it impossible for one so nearly connected with this disagreeable man, to possess any winning qualities.

But all parties were agreeably disappointed when Miss Kenyon arrived. Mr. Kenyon always traveled in his own carriage, a queer vehicle contrived expressly for use in his scientific excursions, to convey his apparatus of various kinds, and the boxes of specimens which he was constantly accumulating. Miss Kenyon, who had no other escort, had for once consented to accompany him, and out of the midst of packing boxes, and geological hammers, and other scientific lumber, where a chaise seat had been placed for the occasion, he helped her to descend before the porch of Moreland Farm.

Had Miss Kenyon been one whit less graceful and self-possessed, Claudia, who in her capacity of hostess stood upon the porch waiting to receive her, could not have repressed the smile that threatened to merge into merry laughter. But the lady stepped down with quiet ease, and received the welcome of the young mistress of the mansion with a dignity that seemed to assert her superiority over all accidental surroundings or appliances.

With the same air she followed her hostess to the chamber which had been prepared for her, and rejecting all offers of service, with a manner that amounted to a dismissal, she was shortly left alone. Then she sat down to think, and a change came over the dark beauty of her face. For Elizabeth Kenyon was very beautiful, with a wierd, or rather as her enemies, of whom she had many, were wont to say, with a diabolical beauty. None over whom she threw the spell of her influence ever escaped her—though in agony of penitence or remorse they cursed, they followed her.

She had noted the flitting and suppressed smile with which Claudia had witnessed her descent from the carriage. From that instant she hated her, and the object for which she had consented to come to Moreland Farm had been more firmly decided upon, as a means, at least, of revenge. A mocking light glittered in her dark, brilliant eyes as their glances followed Claudia from the room, and when she had carefully secured the door, and listened to the tread of her light footsteps along the corridor and down the staircase, she allowed a derisive laugh to burst from her lips. Leaning her head upon hand she thought deeply, until the striking of the clock upon the mantel reminded her that it was time to prepare for dinner. Then she rose murmuring, "Yes, yes, that will do admirably, though I wish he were not so stiff and priggish, and were a shade more presentable," and with the same derisive smile upon her features, she rapidly but skilfully performed the duties of her toilet.

When Miss Kenyon entered the parlor, where the guests were assembled awaiting the summons to dinner, she had never appeared more radiantly beautiful. At dinner, when she was seated beside her host, she delighted him with a display of graceful wit, that while it charmed, compelled him to pause more than once in wonder, and aroused a slight mortification as he detected the rust that had gathered upon his own colloquial powers. Perhaps Miss Kenyon read this latent feeling, for she adroitly led the conversation to topics connected with his favorite pursuits, where the disadvantage was soon lost. On these, as on all subjects, she conversed well and fluently, adopting the nomenclature so well, and using her knowledge to such good advantage, that the superficial nature of her acquirements was not easily detected. Every one was charmed with Miss Kenyon, and those of the guests who had met her before, took blame to themselves for previous ill judgments, and decided that she had never appeared so well, or so truly womanly as in the narrow circle of this country home.

In truth, she exerted all her fascinations on that first evening. She well knew how important are first impressions, and she made them, strong and deep, as she conversed with all, by turns grave or gay, witty or with a soft, half-expressed sadness of tone and mien. But when she was again in her chamber the mocking smile returned to her face. Standing before her mirror, clad in her long, white dressing-gown, her face looked ghastly pale. She lifted the heavy masses of black hair from her temples, and bound them back so closely as to leave the broad brow exposed. Then she bent forward, and by the strong light of the wax candles that burned in the brackets on each side the old-fashioned toilet, she traced in the clear mirror the lines of thought, and care, and passion which in that hour of self-abandoument, seemed to make Elizabeth Kenyon ten years older than she had appeared but an hour before, when surrounded by a charmed circle of listeners in the parlor.

When she had gazed a time, she brought her desk and taking out materials sat down to write. There was a fixed and painful expression upon her face that told of a decision made, of a will strong enough to triumph over feeling, and to trample even upon her own heart. The letter she wrote was long, and need not all be given here. But one paragraph more immediately elucidates her purpose, and may claim a place:

"Of course, dear Harry," she wrote, "you attach no meaning to my jesting words the night we parted. If even you were in an earnest mood, which I have so little vanity as to doubt, you should have known that Elizabeth Kenyon was no wife for you. Neither of us could do a more foolish thing than to speak such words in earnest; and to prove to you what my feelings really are, I will now disclose the object which brought me to this farm-house where I am now staying. Moreland Farm is the property of Elnathan Moreland, a bachelor of forty years, and who looks even older. He is a man of wealth, a gentleman by birth, and a scholar; and, indeed, but for his modesty, would hold a distinguished place among men of science. Moreland Farm is more like an English manor house than an American farm house. The wealth and taste of its former and present proprietors have been lavished upon it, and it is, in fact, a most picturesque and comfortable residence. And—now I come to the gist of my letter—*I intend to become its mistress.* Do you understand? I shall be the wife of Elnathan Moreland within six months! Then you shall be our favored guest, and I will cease to rely upon my powers of cajolery, and fascination, and all the diabolical capacities with which you confess that you believe me endowed, if you do not, within another year, obtain the hand of Claudia Moreland, the beautiful sister of my husband—that-is-to-be—and the heiress of no inconsiderable fortune. What say you—will you cease your pursuit of Elizabeth Kenyon, whom you know so well that I wonder, continually, how you can love her, and let her marriage be the stepping stone by which you can climb into a position beside the heiress, Claudia Moreland? Write at once, and tell me if you join in the compact—for you have something, even now, to do to aid my plot, and which I will disclose to you anon."

Much more she wrote hurriedly, frantically—as if in haste to put her determination beyond her power of retraction—then, without reading what she had penned, she sealed up the sheets, and directed the envelope to "Harry Harland, New York." She laid the letter beneath her pillow, and extinguishing the lights, lay down, not to sleep, but to toss in burning restlessness through the long hours that yet remained of the summer night. Sleep only visited her eyelids fitfully after the dawn had stolen in; nevertheless, when she appeared at the breakfast table a skilful toilet had repaired all damages to her complexion, produced by her vigil, and not even Claudia herself seemed fresher than she, as she smilingly and gracefully returned the salutations of the assembled guests.

Claudia was less at ease. With the instinctive repugnance which pure and childlike natures feel for those who are evil, she shrunk from Elizabeth Kenyon. The feeling which repelled her from the side of her visitor was undefined, even vague, but too real to admit of a doubt of its existence. She could not join in Mrs. Walter's praises of Miss Kenyon, nor respond to her brother's few words of grave commendation. A dim presentiment of evil hung over her, and oppressed her usually healthy spirit with a morbid gloom. She wished to force herself from Miss Kenyon's presence, but saw no opportunity of escape.

We would not dwell upon the evil arts of a vile and unprincipled woman. It is enough that she triumphed, as the unscrupulous so often do. The object was accomplished, and the next Christmas saw her installed mistress of Moreland Farm.

Claudia had suffered much since the announcement of her brother's contemplated marriage, yet she had not dared to confide to him her vague fears. He was so much older than herself, so much wiser, and, above all, he was so much in love with the first woman who had ever awakened in him that passion, that Claudia felt instinctively that her remonstrances would be vain. And so, without a word of warning, this man of noble, transparently pure nature was wedded to a woman whose whole life had been a succession of lies and vile plots; who, even at the altar, perjured herself in giving her hand to him while her heart was avowedly in another's keeping.

Moreland Farm was Claudia's home—she had no legal claim to it, for it was solely her brother's property, but neither his parents nor himself had contemplated her leaving it except for the shelter of a husband's roof. But when a new mistress was installed there, her comforts were materially decreased, while she was daily made to feel that she was considered an intruder, by acts and words too closely veiled by courtesy to admit of resentment. She became very unhappy, and for the first time a cloud rested upon her fair brow unnoticed by her brother. He was too much devoted to his fascinating wife to have eyes for another.

At this period Harry Harland was introduced at Moreland Farm. The plot worked well. Its hidden wires were held by a skilful hand. She knew the value of sympathy to a saddened heart, and she took care that Claudia should need sympathy whenever Harland was at hand.

He, too, knew how delicately, and with an affectation of chivalric respect and devotion, to manifest his interest in Claudia's annoyances. He knew well when the hour came that he might hint, that if her home had become intolerable, another, prepared by loving hands, was ready for her acceptance. He knew how a young and untried heart may mistake its own emotions, and believe gratitude to be the love it simulates.

Here, too, the wicked triumphed, and Claudia became the wife of Harry Harland. Her brother, deceived by his wife's representations both of Harland's worth and of Claudia's attachment to him, willingly consented to the marriage, and gave his sister to the vile accomplice of his wife.

Claudia, who had lived all her life, until her brother's marriage, surrounded by the tenderest love, soon found herself the victim of coldness that at times became even abuse. Harland was a spendthrift and a gambler. He extorted from her her money, her jewels, everything which he could convert to money for his purposes, and waited impatiently for the time when she should come in possession of her property on attaining her majority. And when that day came he scarcely relaxed his abuse, because he found that some portion of the estate was settled inalienably upon her infant heir.

Meanwhile he kept his greedy eye upon Moreland Farm. The marriage of Elnathan Moreland had been childless, and the estate, encumbered only with the widow's dowry, would revert to Claudia in case of his death. As the years rolled on, and Elnathan's failing health made his death seem near, Harland's spirits rose. He had long since squandered all of his wife's fortune, and but for the small income derived from that portion settled upon their child, thev would have been in utter poverty.

At this period, a child was born in Moreland Farm, and scarcely had the cradle of the heir been installed in his nursery, than Elnathan Moreland died; and thus life and death met beneath its roof.

The widow and her child were left in sole possession of the large property, and Harland gnashed his teeth in impotent rage as he saw the prize for which he had waited torn from his grasp. Moreland had left no will, and no portion of his property passed into Claudia's possession.

Strange as it may seem to those who have not deeply studied the nature of woman, Claudia, who had been first attracted to Harland only by gratitude, had learned, in the early days of their union, to love him; and through all the sorrows and trials of her life with him, had clung to him with an almost unparalleled devotion. She never opposed his desires or thwarted his wishes; not even when he proposed, soon after her brother's death, that Elizabeth and her child should reside with them in the city. She shrank from the very anticipation of such an inmate as Elizabeth, but even that shuddering repulsion she hid beneath her usual quiet but alert obedience to Harland's slightest requests.

Elizabeth came, and Claudia felt that her last gleam of hope had died in gloom, as she crossed the threshold of that desecrated home. And she was right. Hitherto Harland had manifested toward her some occasional and fitful gleams of tenderness, but, from the period of Elizabeth's coming, an unvarying and contemptuous coldness marked his manner. He entirely neglected her, devoting all his time and thoughts to Elizabeth, who, on her part, hesitated not to show by her triumphant manner, that she well understood the position which she held.

Claudia's health had resisted repeated trials, but under this last and worst, it utterly failed. A year from the time of Elizabeth's entrance into her house, she became so ill as to make it necessary to seek medical attendance abroad. Elizabeth accompanied the sufferer to a distant city, and to the residence of a notorious quack, whose advertisements of wonderful cures had made his own fortune and that of sundry newspapers. She remained with the invalid a short time, and then, on pretence of the illness of her child, returned to New York, carrying the report that she was recovering and already convalescent. Claudia was left to the mercy of this unprincipled and irresponsible impostor. Three weeks afterward a letter from him announced her death to her husband; and the same day the coffin containing her remains was landed in New Kork. There was an ostentatious funeral, and a display of mourning badges and white 'kerchiefs, but few tears were shed, except by the orphan girl, whose only friend had departed.

By what hellish arts, or devices, the death of Claudia had been compassed, none may know. Suspicion was strong among the few who knew the facts of the relations of the parties—but suspicions unsupported by proofs avail nothing. And no one had sufficient interest in the matter to seek for proofs.

Even when, a few months later, the marriage of Harland and Elizabeth was announced, though a thrill of horror was felt by many, though the affair was made the subject of comment in the various circles of city life, another item of news—something more startling, or more terrible, soon swept away even its memory.

Harland and Elizabeth retired to Moreland Farm upon their marriage. They were soon forgotten in the city, and their few neighbors at Moreland Farm, though they might wonder and exclaim, knew too little of the case to do more.

There, then, they live in plenty and prosperity. If the pale faces of the victims of their arts ever arise before them in dream or fancy, if ever the memory of those pure and loving natures comes back to them from the past in mild yet terrible rebuke, if ever the pictures on the walls of those who once dwelt there, in an aromal atmosphere of love, look frowningly upon their fierce and blasphemous quarrels, only their own stricken consciences attest what they feel. Outwardly they are happy and prosperous—their day of retribution has not yet come—it may never come, save in the stings of accusing conscience. But none need envy their fate. When the wicked triumph, it is better to be the victim than the victor, better, like Claudia, to die beneath unmerited persecution, better to starve for love or for bread, than to be the base robber who condemns his fellows to such starvation, and bears away with his prize the monitor whose voice is never silenced, and who is at once accuser and judge.

PERFECTION.

Perfection is not mortal's dower,
The lotus—fairest, sweetest flower—
The water's pride, the garden's gem,
Hath yet a thorn upon its stem.

VIRTUE AND VICE.

Morality is of a fixed and unchangeable nature. Virtue and vice are not mere sounds. They have their foundation in the eternal and essential difference of things. They can possibly receive no change. There is an intrinsic beauty in virtue, and an intrinsic deformity in vice, which must ever mark them from each other. Virtue never can be made vice, nor vice virtue. Their nature is firm and immoveable. It depends neither on the caprice or opinions of men, nor on the arbitrary constitution of God himself, but is the standard by which all intelligent free agents ought to determine and regulate their actions. There is an immutable good in virtue, and an immutable evil in vice. We, therefore, lie under the obligation to practice the former, and avoid the latter. That is founded not only on positive law or command, but also in the native goodness of the one, and in the malignity inseparably attending the other.

Virtue is the health and strength of the soul. Vice is its bane and destruction. Even as the former is a food which nourishes it and agrees with its constitution, so vice is a cruel disease which wastes and consumes it. Nay, it is a deadly poison, which tears and divides the firm texture and composition of its parts. Did the reader ever observe how his mind has been pleased and delighted when his eye has beheld a beautiful object in nature, or a pleasing prospect in a sweet landscape? Has he ever marked how his soul—even though ruffled and discomposed—has been ravished and delighted, and rendered placid, calm, and serene by an agreeable strain of music? Even so will the sight and practice of virtue—virtue, so related to the faculties of a rational soul!—fill his mind with pleasure, ease, and satisfaction. So a virtuous person must be as completely happy in this world as man possibly can be. He must enjoy himself. A divine peace and serenity must be his. In whatever state he may be fixed, he must reflect upon his conduct with pleasure and satisfaction. But contrary feelings must be the inheritance of vice, and the curse of vicious persons. Their conduct must be full of pain and uneasiness to them. It must render them obnoxious to their own reason. The same principle which urges them to punish and abhor vice in others must teach them to loathe and abhor themselves. And, condemning their own conduct, they must know that others hate and contemn them for it. And this is punishment. The mean opinion which they are aware every rank and order of men entertain of them must necessarily be attended with an inward torment and vexation of mind. So we begin in this life to experience a foretaste of the Heaven and the Hell of the future world!

AMERICAN CHIVALRY.

An Englishman traveling in this country is writing a series of very acute and good-natured letters, descriptive of his experiences in the "home of the brave and the land of the free." Among other good things, he gets off the following:—I am convinced that a lady, no matter what her age and attractions might be, could journey through the whole extent of the Union, not only without experiencing a single annoyance, but aided in every possible way with unobtrusive civility. Indeed, great numbers of Sophonisbas and Almiras do travel about, protected only by the chivalry of their countrymen and their own undoubted propriety. To them the best seats, the best of everything, are always allotted. A friend of mine told me of a little affair at a New York theatre, the other night, illustrative of my assertion. A stiff-necked Englishman had engaged a front place, and of course the best corner; when the curtain rose he was duly seated, opera-glass in hand, to enjoy the performance. A lady and gentleman came into the box shortly afterwards; the cavalier in escort, seeing that the place where our friend sat was the best, called his attention, saying, "The lady, sir," and motioned that the corner should be vacated. The possessor, partly because he disliked the imperative mood, and partly because it bored him to be disturbed, refused. Some words ensued, which attracted the attention of the sovereign people in the pit, who magisterially inquired what was the matter? The American came to the front of the box, and said, "There is an Englishman here, who will not give up his place to a lady." Immediately their majesties swarmed up by dozens over the barriers, seized the offender, very gently though, and carried him to the entrance; he kicked and fought in vain; he excited neither the pity nor the anger of his stern executors; they placed him carefully on his feet again at the steps, one man handing him his hat, another his opera-glass, and a third the price he had paid for his ticket for admission (!), then quietly shut the door upon him and returned to their places. The shade of the departed Judge Lynch must have rejoiced at such an angelic administration of his law!

THE "GOOD OLD TIMES."

At a late meeting of the British Archæological Association, a member read a paper illustrative of the ancient relations between the serf and his master. He also gave instances of extraordinary judical punishments, and of singular methods of trial. A man who had been guilty of parricide was condemned to have his body surrounded with nine rings or hoops of steel, which were forced into the flesh; and these he was to carry with him nine years, riveted in such a manner, that they could not be unloosed without great difficulty. They eat their way into the flesh almost to the bone, and produced the most excruciating torments. Another, for a murder, had thus fixed in his body a hoop made of the sword with which he had committed the crime. The punishment for robbery in the reign of the Saxon Edgar, was very severe. The offender was first deprived of his eyes; his hands, feet, ears, and nose were then cut off; he was finally scalped; and in this state he was exposed in the fields to the mercy of beasts and birds until death.

BALLAD OF ETHEL MAY.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

I fell in love of a summer's eve,
When a smooth young cheek was mine—
Stroking his beard, said Baron Rheve,
A-drinking his ripe old wine.

I fell in love with Ethel May,
At a rout in London town;
Proud dames were there in their trappings gay,
But she wore a plain white gown.

Silent she moved through the music and light
That blossomed and filled the hall—
White brows flashed under their jewels bright,
But I sighed—she is fairest of all!

My plume kissed the dust at her noiseless feet—
The lilies blushed red on her cheek—
Thy voice must be soft as a lute-murmur sweet,
Oh, speak to me, beautiful! speak.

The dance swept on—the song rose higher,
Drowning her cold replies—
The scorn on her brow was a flash of fire
When I strove to look into her eyes.

And she stabbed me through with an English sneer
When I said—sweet Ethel May,
If you were a lady, as I am a peer,
I would woo you and wed you straightway!

She baffled my pride with her plebeian blood,
And her fiery English scorn,
Till my Norman name before her stood
Of its ancient splendors shorn.

Her soul was white as a pearl that glows
Under the star-lit sea!
Her heart was ripe as a red, red rose,
But it bore a thorn for me!

Her face blossomed out like a sunshiny June,
Rob Forest came in at the door—
Oh, she was troth-bride to the sturdy loon,
And so I dared love her no more!

I fell *out* of love of a summer's eve,
When a beardless chin was mine—
Sipping his beaker—quoth Baron Rheve,
A-drinking his rare old wine.

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FOREST SKETCHES---NO. 28.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COL. WALTER P. DUNLAP

ADVENTURE WITH A HIPPOPOTAMUS.

"Where's Ben?" some one asked, after the rest of us had collected around Uncle Abner to hear the continuation of his story of adventures during his African cruise.

Aye—where was Ben? We were all present but him. I started up and went out, and as I reached the broad piazza I heard a scuffling sound, accompanied by a sort of groaning and grunting, at the end of the house. I hurried around, and there I found about a score of our host's darkeys, gathered at a respectful distance, watching a performance which was being given by Ben Gilroy and Fitzeben.

For some days—aye, for over two weeks—Ben had been threatening to throw Fitz upon his back if he didn't behave himself. The darkey had declared that Ben wasn't "big enuff to frow" him. It seemed that they had now got at it. Old Ben had got out of sight of the rest of us, and then challenged Fitz to wrestle. I ran to the window and informed the boys of what was going on, and in a few seconds we were all collected close by the scene of action.

It was a hard tug for both of them. They were at it after the "side hug" fashion, and there was an opportunity for them to show their strength. When we first arrived it seemed that Ben had the advantage of both strength and science; but I was not long in making up my mind the other way. I saw that Fitz was "playing off." He let two opportunities, in succession, pass without taking advantage.

"Now I got ye!" grunted Ben, as he caught a "knee lock," and threw himself back.

But he came very nigh going himself. The darkey freed his leg in an instant. For some time they worked like troopers. They grunted and tugged—and then tugged and grunted—and then they'd rest a moment. At length Ben caught a very neat lock upon his antagonist's knee again.

"Yer'r down now, ye black rascal!" he cried.

"Am I?" returned Fitz. And as the darkey spoke he whirled his leg about—brought the side of his foot against the heel upon which his adversary's weight was resting with a force that knocked it out—and at the same time he lifted Ben's fat body clear from the ground, and laid him, fair and square on his back, upon the greensward!

"Dar, now!" uttered Fitz, as he stepped back and allowed Ben to get up. "P'r'aps ye'll say ye ken frow ole Fitz agin, eh?"

Ben reached his feet, and having puffed and blowed a few seconds, he remarked,—

"I'll fix ye, ye black cloud! Wait till I get over this lame back that I got in the woods the other day."

"Oh—ho-ho-he-he-ha! Why Mas'r Ben, yer back's as stiff as a tree. It's yer great big foot dat gin out. Yer head's kind o' toppy."

Ben was too tired to try it again, so he went with us into the house, where he confessed that Fitz could have thrown him half a dozen times before he did, had he been so disposed. He said the darkey was the strongest man he had ever met—not only strong in the breast, arms, and back, but with legs and feet like mill-posts.

As soon as we had got over our laughing fit we turned to Uncle Abner, and he opened as follows:—

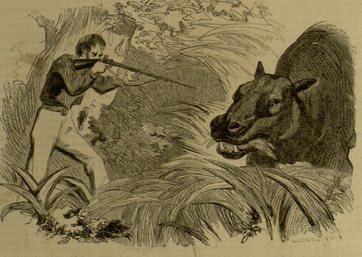
"We reached the Nile without further trouble after we had seen the last of the leopards; but I must say that I wasn't paid for my trouble—at least, so far as anything about the great river was concerned. A sail up our own Mississippi is worth ten times as much. Yet, if I could have gone some six or eight hundred miles further down the river, towards Egypt, I should have seen some of the old ruins that might have richly repaid me.

"However, I had come to see the country and the people; and I saw them; and in seeing them I was much interested. After spending a week at Berber I took a flat boat for Damer, and from there I ascended the Takazze River, which is one of the largest of the tributaries to the Nile. I went up as far as Atbara, a large town, and after which the river is sometimes called. Here we found very respectable accommodations, and I concluded to stop and rest awhile.

"One bright morning, I took a boat, intending to go up the river a few miles and try my luck at fishing. We had a wind fair for both ways, if it only remained steady, so I took no help with me save my two companions, Abdac and Mada. Had there been a prospect of having to row against the wind or against the current, I should have taken two oarsmen. But the wind was likely to hold steady, so I started off with only my own crew. We took our fire-arms and fishing materials, and started.

"We reached the place where I had been told I should find fish, and there we dropped our sails, and let go a huge stone which was made fast to the painter. At the end of half an hour we had caught four small fish, somewhat resembling the common "horn-pout" of our fresh water ponds, and which Abdac called *skarl*. But these were not the fish we wanted; so we up anchor, and having hoisted one of our sails we ran a mile further up, when we came to a wide place in the river, one bank being high land, while from the other swept away a wide, marshy tract, covered with tall reeds. This seemed a fine place for fish, the kind we were after being mostly found under the shade of high banks.

"Our boat was going through the water at a pretty good jog, and I had just told Mada to let go the haulyards, when we struck something with such force that I was knocked over upon my side. Mada fell sprawling into the bottom of the boat, and Abdac had me by the knee to hold himself up. We were thrown around into the wind, and as the boat began to fall back I started forward to see what we had fallen afoul of, supposing it to be either a stump, or a bit of sunken land. I had just reached the forward thwart, and had one hand upon the foremast, when I saw a sudden commotion about four feet from the bows, and on the next instant came a loud bellowing noise, followed by a cloud of spray which came dashing over me.



"For a moment I was so startled that I could not even think. The loud bellow, and the blinding plash of water in my face, were enough to startle any man; but my thoughts quickly returned, and I knew just what had happened. We had run afoul of a *hippopotamus!* His huge, ugly head was above water, and he was making for the boat.

"I had never seen one of these animals at large before; but I had seen a pair of tame hippopotami at Zanzibar, and knew most of their peculiarities. They are very often found as large as an elephant, and full as heavy; but their legs are very short, and upon land they are so clumsy and unwieldly that a smart child could run away from them. They grow to be twelve feet in length, and about the same in circumference; and seem to be very solid and compact. Their skin is thick and tough, almost as much so as that of the rhinoceros, and without hair, save here and there a few bristle-like affairs, which are generally white in color. The feet are divided into four broad toes, but they are not connected by any membrane, as we might expect from its amphibious nature. The head is immense, and the mouth, which looks terrible enough, when the huge teeth are all exposed, can be opened to a distance of a foot and a half. The peculiarity of this mouth is that the lower jaw is stationary, while the upper one has the motive power.

"The hippopotamus is not an ugly beast, unless he is starving or molested; but when attacked or bothered he becomes at once vengeful and formidable. In the water he can handle his massive body with surprising quickness, turning and darting about with an agility which seems utterly anomalous, when considered in connection with his size and form. His tail, which is short, is flat and pointed, and no doubt serves both as a scull and rudder.

"As soon as I had discovered the character of the snag against which we had run I sprung aft for my rifle. I had just grasped it and turned to go forward again, when a quick cry from Abdac broke upon the air, and as he started back, I saw the monster spring up and seize the bows of the boat between his huge jaws.

"Our frail craft was taken under water as though a mountain had fallen upon it! I saw it going, and lifting my rifle as high as I could above my head, I leaped towards the shore. We had run close under the high bank, where I had meant to anchor, but the boat had been driven some four or five rods from the shore by the wind; but I was a good swimmer, and easily reached dry land without getting my rifle wet enough to damage anything. The bank was not perpendicular, but afforded a landing place almost anywhere, so we had no trouble on that score.

"As soon as I reached the shore I turned to see how matters stood with my companions. Abdac was very near the shore, swimming with all his might, while Mada was not quite so well off. The latter had been sitting down when the blow came, and as the boat went under he was taken under with it. The boat came to the surface upon its beam-ends, the masts and sails preventing it from turning over, and Mada came up under its stern, puffing and blowing like a porpoise. When I first saw him he was upon one side of the boat, holding on to the gunwale, while the hippopotamus was upon the other side I could see that the poor fellow was frightened.

"And well he might be, for what protection had he from the deadly monster? The boat could be smashed like a bubble, and as quickly. The beast was some five or six feet from the boat, and was gazing upon the frightened Arab. I saw that there was not a moment to lose, and a lucky thought flashed through my mind. If Mada was attacked that would be the last of him, in spite of all we could do.

"'He's waiting for Mada to move,' said Abdac, who had joined me. 'If he moves the brute 'll snap him up.'

"I called out to the poor fellow to remain perfectly quiet. I believed that if I could attract the animal's attention, and then wound him, he would make for me. Abdac hinted that I'd better step a little way into the water. I improved upon the advice, and having waded in up to my knees, I commenced to cry out at the top of my voice, my companion joining me.

"As I had supposed, the hippopotamus turned his head towards me, and on the instant I took aim and fired. I then bade Abdac to take my place and divert the animal while I reloaded my piece. My powder was in a metal flask, and of course it had been kept dry.

"The huge monster uttered a terrific roar, and made a plunge for the shore. His roar, or cry, is just about like what the grunt of a hog would be if it could be lengthened out. He came swiftly enough until his feet touched the land, and then his passage became slow and lumbering. The blood was running from a wound in his head, just below and back of the left eye, and he was maddened into fury. As Abdac ran back upon dry land and clambered up the bank, the brute bellowed savagely, and hastened after him. The bank was not very steep, so he made his way up without slipping back.

"Just as his head appeared above the edge of the bank I had finished loading my rifle; but that was not a good time to fire. He was in such motion—pitching and tossing his wounded head—that I was not sure of my aim. The eye was the only point I dared trust. His heart lay beneath such a mass of tough skin and flesh that I feared I should not be able to touch it. There were quite a number of trees at hand, and I at once sprang in front of Abdac, and succeeded in getting the brute to give me chase, which he did with a will.

"In about five minutes the hippopotamus began to show signs of fatigue, and I thought I might then try an experiment. So I ran around in a circle some half dozen times, and then dodged behind a tree, and cocked my rifle. As I had hoped, the beast came to within a few yards, and there stopped, as though he would consider whether he should run against the tree, or follow me around it.

"But I gave him little time for reflection. I had worked too carefully for this position to lose its result now. The moment he was fairly still, and had his gaze fixed upon me, I took deliberate aim at his right eye, and fired. He gave a terrific howl and plunged towards me, hitting the tree with a force that almost cracked it. As he felt this shock he staggered back, and then came at me again, and again he hit the tree. He was past seeing plainly, even if he could see at all, for the left eye must have suffered a severe nervous attack in the damage which had been done to the other one.

"A third time the monster plunged towards me, and a third time he hit the tree, which had fairly become loosened at the roots by the repeated shocks. But his power of locomotion was about expended. As he staggered back from this third attack he reeled and fell, and after a few struggles his life was gone.

"At this moment Mada made his appearance, creeping carefully up over the bank, as though he would be sure not to fall into the jaws of his enemy. As soon as he had satisfied himself that the amphibious monster was past all power of doing harm he went back with us to the river's edge.

"We found that the boat had floated down some distance, but she was easily overtaken, when Mada swam out and brought a line on shore. We hauled the light craft to the land, and found the two muskets safe beneath the thwarts; and having turned the water out, we set her afloat again. The bows were crushed almost down to the foot of the cutwater; but by all three of us sitting aft we raised the forward part so high that no water came in, and thus we sailed safely back to the town. In the afternoon the natives went up and cut the huge carcass in pieces and brought it home, some parts of it being esteemed by them very highly for food.

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VULGARISM IN SILVER SLIPPERS.

The position accorded to the simple accident of wealth among us, is absurd and wicked. It is absurd because it assumes that a fortunate cast of the die in making a man rich, renders him worthy of respect. Does a full pocket purify the heart, or refine the character? Does it wash out the stains of a filthy, grovelling nature? Does it make the vulgar decent, the ignorant wise, or the vicious virtuous? Nothing can be conceived more absurd than the influence accorded to wealth. Besides, it is wicked. It is encouraging villainy. It is offering a premium on crime. The rewards bestowed on the accident of wealth, in spite of the infamy sometimes attending it, are an incentive to make money by any means, fair or foul. The aspirants to place see the magic influence of money, in transmuting meanness to honor, covetousness into liberality, vulgarity into refinement, disgrace into distinction, and hence they feel assured that any course must end well that ends in making them rich. They plunge into the slough of infamy to reach the golden purse, with a confidence that when it is once obtained it will remove all the filth, and give them a place among the honorable of the land.

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BACK-WOODS TRAVELING.

A New Yorker who has been traveling by stage-coach in the "far West," gives some amusing accounts of his experience and adventures. He says:—Sometimes we went over layers of pine trees, called corduroy roads, that made our very teeth clatter again; sometimes we stuck fast for an hour or two in the morass, being as the driver said, "in a pretty considerable darned fix;" and occasionally we crossed quaking bridges, that threatened every instant to give way beneath us. When we came to a morass, the driver would open the door and say, "Now, gentlemen, I guess you'll do *that* thing for me." *That thing* was to get out and walk almost knee-deep in mud, until he succeeded in getting the coach through; but scarcely had we again resumed our seats, when, with a jerk that sent us flying out of our places, and made the four months' child scream till it was literally black in the face, the coach would drop into a mud-hole some three feet deep, and open would come the door again—"Now, gentlemen, I guess you'll do the *other* thing for me." The other thing was to get out, lay hold of the wheels, and pull the "darned" coach out of the hole by main force, and we had no alternative.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mouraille.—This correspondent asks, if a gentleman should meet a lady friend in the street, who sees him, but, instead of giving a token of recognition, turns her head away, whether it would be incumbent on him to continue the acquaintance, unless an explanation were made? It is not incumbent on any one to continue an acquaintance unless he chooses to do so. A lady has a right to recognize or not recognize whomsoever she pleases, in the street or elsewhere, and no gentleman has any right to call her to an account for her conduct in this respect. If a gentleman feels aggrieved, however, because a lady omits to recognize him in the street and turns her head away, he can turn *his* head away the next time they meet, or discontinue the acquaintance altogether.

James.—It would not do to engage the girl's cousins, or anybody else, to make proposals of marriage for you. Such a matter you should attend to in person. Pluck up courage, declare your love, and ask the girl to marry you.

Lottie Lovelace.—Your parents have no right to interfere with your marriage, you being of lawful age; and if the facts are as you represent, you had better pursue the even tenor of your way, and pay no regard to their selfish opposition.

Columbia.—We do not accept contributions from unknown parties, and we do not wish to engage any new contributors.

O. T. H.—We cannot give you the names asked for, as we do not know them.

Honor.—If the young lady refuses to give up your letters to herself and her sister, your only alternative is to let her keep them, as you of course would not wish to make the affair public. Should you do so, she would be universally sympathized with, while you would be blamed and laughed at. Just let the matter drop entirely, and show no further desire to win her hand, and she may then be anxious to bestow it upon you Oftentimes when a man shows too much eagerness to marry a woman, she delights in tantalizing him by repeated refusals, whereas if he would himself appear indifferent she would be more apt to encourage his suit. This adventure should teach you the danger of writing semi-love-letters to the sister of the woman whom you wish to marry; such a course is certain to occasion trouble.

Penelope.—This correspondent quarrelled with her lover, and while the fit of displeasure was on, accepted an offer from another and married him. Now, she is very unhappy, and when she meets her old lover in society she knows not what to do—whether to avoid him altogether, or to let her heart have sway and exhibit to him the partiality she cannot help feeling. If she still cherishes much affection for him, she ought to avoid his society. It is exceedingly injudicious for any woman to nurture her partiality for a man whom she loves more than she does her husband. It would be wiser for her to avoid such a man altogether; or, if she cannot help meeting him sometimes, she should treat him with the most invincible formality.

Miss Clio.—Women have just as many rights as men, no doubt, and their rights should be equally respected. The whole question of "Woman's rights" is very much obscured by the confounding of matters of *right* with matters of *taste*. Women have a *right* to do many things which no woman of good taste and refinement could be induced to do; and the same may be said of men. Women have a *right* to do whatever may be necessary for their protection, welfare and happiness; but *what* they will do *personally*, and what they will permit *others* to do for them, are matters of taste and judgment.

Green River wishes to know, in case a young man with only a tolerable education and $60 in cash, should take a notion to travel through Europe, and pay $30 or $50 for his passage across the Atlantic, what would be likely to become of him on reaching Liverpool or London? That would depend somewhat upon the young man's character and energy. He might be able to beg his way back, but the chances are that he would be sent to some asylum for the destitute, and clothed in the durable but unpicturesque costume provided for the members of such institutions in England.

A Lady Seeking a Divorce wishes to know if there would be any impropriety in receiving the attentions of a gentleman with a view to matrimony, before the decision of the court is given, which she is certain will be in her favor; also, if there would be any harm in her entertaining gentlemen generally. It strikes us that a woman who cherishes the sentiments which gave birth to these questions, had better be exceedingly careful what she does, if she wishes to get a divorce. It would be not only indelicate but impolitic for her to do either of the things she has inquired about.

G. W., Galesburg. You must be mistaken in stating that the "Common Council of your city" have passed a law "imposing a penalty of not less than $10, nor more than $100, for playing chequers simply for fun, and without anything staked on the game." If they have passed such a law or ordinance, they cannot enforce it, and the numerous readers of the Ledger in Galesburg need not pay the slightest attention to any such Dogberry attempts at municipal legislation.

Toleration.—Your long communication in defence of infidelity does not possess even the merit of grammatical accuracy, and your philosophy is as false as your syntax. No wonder you would not like to have such an idiotic jumble of atheistic cant printed with your "real name attached to it." But do not be alarmed; you do not run the slightest risk of ever seeing it in the columns of the Ledger.

An Incensed Husband.—The best thing for yourself and wife is to pay no attention to the supercilious conduct of your superficial and pretentious cousins. You should be thankful that they do not speak to your wife when they meet her in the street, for such people would not be apt to say anything which to a sensible person would be either pleasant or profitable to hear.

Miss K. H. J., Baltimore.—You had better buy the Ledger at some news-office in your city. The back numbers from June 7th, 1856, (which we can furnish,) to this date, will cost you $2.24. We will take postage stamps for the odd twenty-four cents, and you can send the two dollars in a good bank note.

H. R. R., N. J.—If you really wish to have the matter set right, you should at once go to see the young lady. It is not easy to explain a difficulty, such as you mention, by letter, although it might be done in ten minutes were the parties brought face to face.

Captain.—We should be glad to oblige you, but it is no part of our design to furnish models of epistolary writing. A letter of introduction, like any other communication, should contain simply what the writer wishes to communicate, expressed in the best style he can command.

Memory.—The only way any faculty of the mind can be improved is by judicious and persevering exercise. The memory is subject to the same laws as other faculties and can only be improved by the use of the means we have suggested.

Boston.—Of course it would be highly improper for you to show the letters of your lady-love to a friend, however intimate he may be; and the fact that he has coaxed you to let him read them is sufficient proof to convince any delicate mind that he is not a gentleman.

Charles M.—We do not know where you could get such letters drafted as you mention. The numbers of the Ledger containing "Orion, the Gold-beater" will cost you forty-four cents.

X. O. Q.—A postmaster has no right to break the seal of a letter not addressed to himself, under any circumstances. In that respect he has no more privileges than anybody else.

Nellie Norton.—An agreement entered into by a minor, is not binding upon him or her, after arriving at the age of twenty-one, unless it has been ratified by the party subsequent to his or her coming of age.

R. L. W.—The numbers of the Ledger containing the story of "The Refugees" will cost forty-four cents; those containing the story of "Karmel the Scout" will cost forty-eight cents.

Mary Ann.—Of course there would be nothing undignified in your acting as a Sabbath-school teacher, if you performed the duties of the office properly. On the contrary, such action on your part would be highly praiseworthy.

N. E. W.—In writing to a college, for a catalogue, or other purpose, you can address either the President or the Librarian.

An Old Reader of the Ledger.—We think your reasoning and theory are altogether fallacious. Ventriloquism is the power of imitating voices, sounds, or noises, as if they were perfectly extraneous, and not originating in the utterer, but in some other person, and in places at various distances, and even in several directions. A skillful ventriloquist produces these effects without any apparent movement of his jaws, lips, or features. Various opinions have been advanced by physiologists with regard to the manner of producing such an effect. The most commonly received opinion refers it to the power of articulation during inspiration. M. Majendie regards it as a mere modification of the ordinary voice, so as to imitate the sounds which the voice suffers from distance: and latterly, Muller contends that it "consists in inspiring deeply, so as to protrude forward the abdominal viscera by the descent of the diaphragm, and then speaking while the expiration is performed very slowly through a very narrow glottis by means of the sides of the chest alone, the diaphragm maintaining its depressed position. Sounds may be thus uttered which resemble the voice of a person calling from a distance." This is a very probable explanation, especially as the imagination influences the judgment when we direct the ear to the place whence the ventriloquist pretends that the sounds proceed; a part of the trick which is always taken advantage of by the ventriloquists.

A Wife informs us that, a short time since, she, her husband, and their children went on a short pleasure excursion, and that on their return home, as her husband and the children were walking on the upper deck of the steamboat, and she was sitting below, a strange gentleman took a seat beside her and began to talk about the weather, the Chinese war, the high price of sugar, told her that he was a planter from the South, &c., &c., to which she made such responses as she thought proper. When her husband rejoined her, he chided her for talking with a stranger, said it was imprudent, improper, &c., and in fact made such a fuss about it, and has since said so much about it, that she is quite unhappy, and wishes to know what she can do to restore the old state of happiness to the family, and also would like to know if she did wrong to reply to the stranger's remarks? It was not at all improper for our correspondent to listen and reply to the stranger's conversation, considering the place and circumstances, and her husband must be a petty-minded ignoramus to make such an unkind and ungentlemanly disturbance about it. Southern and Western people, especially planters and others who live remote from large towns, are very kind-hearted and sociable, and talk freely to anybody with whom they come in contact, especially ladies, whom they would never think of treating with discourtesy or impertinent familiarity.

A Gratified Reader informs us that he has a friend who insists upon the doctrine that it is impossible to perform any action, whether good or bad, that is not tainted with selfishness in some degree. We should be sorry, for the honor of human nature, to assent to such a proposition. The individual who, while walking by the side of a river, suddenly hears the cry of a drowning man and plunges into the water to his rescue, acts upon the spur of the moment, and in obedience to an impulse of the purest generosity. To accuse such an individual of selfishness, were to look with a jaundiced eye upon a deed ineffably praiseworthy. Again, are alms never given from motives of charity? Is compassion—that compassion which blushes lest its own good deeds should be observed by the passer-by—is this selfishness?

A Boston Apprentice wishes to know whether it be lawful for a master, who has an out-door apprentice bound by an agreement, to deduct from the wages of such apprentice in consequence of absence through illness, no reference to illness being made in the agreement. We reply that a master would be justified in deducting from such wages if he thought proper, provided the apprentice's parents sent him no written notice of the youth's illness. A master is even justified in demanding a medical certificate as proof of the alleged illness, when such illness is made a plea for the absence of the apprentice. The propriety of such a proceeding is obvious when it is reflected that idle apprentices would be constantly staying away on the plea of indisposition, were the law otherwise.

R. S. T.—Lime water is made by pouring six pints of boiling water upon a quarter of a pound of fresh burnt lime. They are to be agitated together, and the vessel covered directly and set apart for three hours ;-afterwards the solution is to be preserved upon the undissolved lime, in well-stopped glass bottles, and the clear fluid poured off when it is wanted for use. It proves very useful in indigestion, attended with much acidity on the stomach, in chronic looseness, diabetes, and whites. It destroys intestinal worms, and is serviceable in slimy bowels. Mixed with an equal quantity of milk, it furnishes an excellent remedy in the bowel complaints of children.

S. S. Y.—The process of watering silk, which gives its surface a peculiar wavy appearance, is performed by passing two pieces of silk placed lengthwise, one on the other, between two metallic rollers: the different parts are thus subjected to different degrees of pressure, from which the wavy appearance results. Silk is embossed by passing the plain stuff between rollers the surface of which contains the desired pattern, on one cylinder raised and on the other sunk, so that the eminences of the one coincide with the depressions in the other

An Orphan.—The executors of your father's estate are not compelled to make you any advance, except the amount necessary to maintain you during your minority; and you will not be permitted to decide what that amount should be. If you wish to go through college, and there are funds enough to pay your expenses, your guardian can send you thither and draw on the executors for money to pay the necessary bills.

Public-School Teacher.—We do not believe in flogging children, especially at school. A teacher who is fit for his station can *command* obedience by his presence and his manner. The trouble is, there are too many incompetent teachers in our schools, who, not having the genius of command in their natures, thump, and cuff, and scold, and flog their pupils into a state of passive stupidity which passes for obedience and order

A Dissatisfied Man.—What is the use of your grumbling about "the uncertainty of the law?" Is not everything (except your grumbling perhaps) uncertain—even life itself? You say that it seems to you that "the laws might easily be so made that anybody could understand them." Well, suppose you try *your* hand at the business, and let us know the result of your labors.

School-Girl.—We cannot encourage you in a course of disobedience to your teachers. As long as you are a member of a school, you should punctiliously and conscientiously obey all the rules and comply with all the regulations of the institution. It is better that you should endure a few hardships than that the whole school should be thrown into confusion.

Old Virginia.—We are not positive as to the matter, but we are strongly inclined to the belief that Washington was never wounded. We certainly have no recollection of ever hearing or reading of such an event. General Wolfe was slain at the seige of Quebec in 1759. He was killed by a rifleman, in the very moment of victory.

M. A. G.—Bashfulness is often the result of nervousness; but in many instances it arises from the fact of having mixed but little in company. In the latter case it can be mitigated, if not altogether thrown off, by going as much as possible into society, and endeavoring to take a due part in conversation.

Cobbett.—The complete works of Edmund Burke, well bound, would probably cost you from $45 to $50. There are eight octavo volumes of them in a London edition we have seen. They have never been republished entire in this country. You could not employ your leisure time better, than in the reading of this great man's writings.

Samantha wishes to know "Whether there be any praise or reward due to a man who strictly does his duty?" Praise is certainly due; but whether he should be rewarded, otherwise than by the approval of his own conscience and the respect of his fellow-men, is a question which we do not feel competent to decide in the compass of a paragraph.

Amabelle.—Your mother is your safest counsellor in all matters of affection and duty; and a man who advises you to distrust *her* teachings and disobey *her* injunctions, should be looked upon with disapprobation, and his specious arguments should be at once communicated to your mother.

Mackintosh.—According to the most authoritative computations there are about two hundred and seventy millions of Christians on the face of the earth, and about one hundred millions of Mahometans. The population of the globe is estimated at about eight hundred and fifty millions.

Domingo.—It will be useless to apply for a divorce unless you can bring something more than hearsay testimony against your wife. You had better keep your own counsel, and not call in the aid of your relatives. They would put the matter beyond the possibility of reconciliation.

W. G. Y.—You should certainly discountenance your sister's scheme for going on the stage. Roscommon is the author of the lines:

> "Immodest words admit of no defence,
> For want of decency is want of sense."

J. B.—We are glad to be assured that the "verse" you sent us is the first you have written, and it is to be hoped it will be the last.

A. W. J. W., Pittsburgh.—Five cents a copy is not too much for the Ledger in your city. It costs a good deal to transport newspapers from New York to Pittsburgh.

J. P. L. X.—We know nothing about the work on matrimony to which you refer. That class of works are usually worthless.

J. W. J.—It is a very good idea to read elementary treatises on law during your leisure hours. Kent's Commentaries is the best work to begin with.

R. H.—It would be quite proper for an engaged couple to have their miniatures taken together in the same picture.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*